

*Spanish Waters*



The Author.

# SPANISH WATERS

*By Henry Reynolds*

*Author of "COASTWISE — CROSS-SEAS"*

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*With 4 charts and 21 illustrations*

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TO  
C F DUNCAN  
IN TOKEN OF  
AFFECTIONATE REGARD  
AND TO  
ALL THE GOOD MEN  
WHO HAVE SAILED IN THE " WINNIE "



Spanish waters, Spanish waters, you are  
ringing in my ears,  
Like a slow sweet piece of music from the  
grey forgotten years

*John Masefield.*



## PREFACE

I AM sanguine enough to believe that the contents of this volume will appeal to every lover of the sea, whether he is himself the happy owner of a yacht or is one of those unfortunates who are compelled to rely for their yachting upon the boats of their friends ; and, also, to the many readers who, though they confess to little liking for the sea and still less for seafaring, agreeing with the opinion of the egregious Dr. Johnson that life in a ship compares ill with even life in a jail, yet acknowledge the attraction of true tales of adventure.

That the *Winnie* has never been fitted with an auxiliary motor often excites wonder in the breasts of acquaintances. I have no prejudice against engines. To the man of scant leisure, to the week-ender oppressed by anxiety about a particular train, an engine is a desirable and almost a necessary part of his equipment ; but I cannot believe that they who, when confronted with a difficult situation, immediately seek extrication by mechanical aid, ever know the comfortable glow of satisfaction~~felt~~ felt by the cruiser who wins through triumphantly with nothing to help but his sails and his seamanship. However that may be, I envy no man his engine ; my cruising began under canvas and under canvas it is likely to end.

## Preface

My thanks are due to Messrs. Rudyard Kipling, John Masefield, and Alfred Noyes (with Messrs Blackwood, his publishers), for permission to quote the lines culled from their works. Versions of "Land of Mantilla and Fan" and "A Cruise that Failed" appeared, originally, in the *Yachting Monthly* under their respective dates, but Mr. Reiach, its then editor, gave me written permission to republish these contributions.

HENRY REYNOLDS.

*September, 1924*

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE "WINNIE" . . . . .	3
THE LAND OF MANTILLA AND FAN . . . . .	11
A CRUISE THAT FAILED . . . . .	81
ACROSS THE BAY . . . . .	141
WEST AND BY SOUTH . . . . .	231





## ILLUSTRATIONS

The Author . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
The <i>Winnie</i> , close-hauled . . . . .	<i>Facing p</i> 6
Part of N. Coast of Spain " Land of Mantilla and Fan " . . . . .	38
General Chart Ushant to Vigo . . . . .	38
Entrance to Bilbao . . . . .	52
West Pier, Bilbao . . . . .	52
Quay, Santander . . . . .	58
Bridge at Portugalete . . . . .	58
Concarneau . . . . .	72
Pier for shipping iron ore, Castro . . . . .	72
Brittany Coast " Land of Mantilla and Fan," " A Cruise that Failed " and " Across the Bay " . . . . .	86
Skipper and Navigator . . . . .	96
French pilot-boat off L'Aberwrach . . . . .	96
Brigantine working out of Concupion <sup>1</sup> Bay . . . . .	126
A sardiner off Camaret . . . . .	126
The <i>Winnie</i> , with wind ahead . . . . .	136
North Coast of Spain " Across the Bay " . . . . .	174
Crossing to the ship-yard Skipper and A G . . . . .	210
Strange fishing gear . . . . .	210
Spanish lancha in a stiff breeze (" Across the Bay ") . . . . .	218
Fishing boats, North Coast of Spain (" Across the Bay ") . . . . .	218
J. H. Von Haast in the cockpit of his own boat . . . . .	242
" A pathetic object she lay " . . . . .	242
W. Coast of Spain. " West and by South " . . . . .	262
The tunny-boat passing through our lee . . . . .	290
A lateener setting sail (" West and by South ") . . . . .	290

THE “WINNIE”

# SPANISH WATERS

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## THE "WINNIE"

She walks the waters like a thing of life  
And seems to dare the elements to strife

BYRON.

THE *Senorita*\* was old, and it grew more difficult each year to disguise the increasing imperfections of age. Further patching was of little service, Mr. Jackett thought, and Percy, one of his carpenters, with a brutal disregard for my feelings, declared that the yacht was as ripe as a pear. In process of time I found myself impaled upon the horns of a painful dilemma: either long trips must be abandoned or another boat must be bought. The former alternative was dismissed at once as unworthy of consideration; the latter, grievous owing to my affection for the *Senorita* and difficult by reason of lack of loose cash, was solved by the providential discovery of the *Winnie*.

She was a Quay Punt of 8 95 tons registered burden, built by Burt and Sons of Falmouth in 1895. After filling a humble rôle of useful work she was bought by the Admiralty and fitted with several unusual contraptions. Later she was converted into a yacht. Her length over all was 31ft. 8in.—her water-line length only an inch or two shorter—with an extreme beam of

\* See "Coastwise-Cross-seas." J. D. Potter, 145, Minorities, London, E 1

9ft. 5in. Her draught was 7 feet. She was yawl rigged and somewhat under-canvased. The forestay led, not to the stem, but to the end of an iron bumpkin, an arrangement which allowed the spread of an unexpectedly large staysail. For ballast she carried a ton of iron on her keel and several tons of iron pigs deftly packed beneath her floor. She had the high, flaring bows of craft of her type. A very wide coach-roof cabin-head gave roomy and airy accommodation below, but seriously curtailed the deck space on either side. Between the cabin and a spacious fo'c'sle were found a bucket W.C. on the port hand, on the starboard, a nicely arranged pantry. The cabin opened into the cockpit, which ran, protected by only narrow waterways between the coamings and the rail, to within a foot of her transom stern. The absence of a sail-locker was a decided drawback, but compared with the confined quarters of the *Senorita* the boat seemed to have ample stowage room.

After some preliminary skirmishing with the owner on the question of price, and, that at last satisfactorily settled, the mysterious juggling with a bill of sale insisted upon by the law and comprehensible by lawyers alone, I bought the *Winnie*.

No sooner was the business completed than calls upon my purse came in fast and furious. My financial stability, rudely shaken to raise the purchase-money, seemed likely to collapse altogether under the pressure of these unexpected claims. The boat had neither windlass nor water-tank, and her binnacle was too small to fulfil satisfactorily its proper functions. By Mr. Jackett's advice, a Mepstead's windlass was selected. This is a windlass of the simplest character. Every part is in sight and can be replaced, if damaged or worn out. To weigh the anchor a pawl is dropped which acts

directly on the chain. To bring up, two pawls are lifted, and the chain runs away freely. Its run can be checked instantly by the pressure of a foot upon a brake. The windlass proved a satisfactory investment in spite of its one drawback, the absence of any projection on which to catch a turn or make a rope fast.

There was not room beneath the cabin floor for a tank. One to hold 50 gallons was specially made to fit beneath the floor of the cockpit. It was a finely finished piece of galvanized ironwork, furnished with a man-hole big enough to allow a thorough cleaning.

The choice of a binnacle proved difficult. My heart was set upon one provided with a five-inch card and a lamp adapted to the use of paraffin. There were in the market plenty of binnacles which satisfied my desire, but were all, without exception, excessively dear. At last, one was got at a reasonable price from Simpson, Lawrence and Co. It was called the "Pointer," and, when once the peculiarities of the lamp were understood, it proved an excellent instrument. For taking sights the hood could be removed bodily; and the possibility of twisting the hood one way or the other proved very convenient, at times, to the helmsman.

In the course of 30 years' cruising a sea-anchor had been used but once, and then more by way of experiment than of actual necessity. But, on the theory that one never knows one's luck, I bought from Hughes and Son, Fenchurch Street, one of Lacy's sea-anchors. These are square, roll up into a small space and are easily stowed.

My new purchase, naturally, roused in my heart certain feelings of excitement, but it was excitement, undoubtedly, of a distinctly sober variety. My thoughts were sorely disturbed by a sense of heartless disloyalty to a tried and faithful friend. Was not the *Senorita*

in her old age being discarded as lightly as a threadbare garment or a battered hat? This foolish idea showed plainly that the excision of sentimentality from even an unromantic mind is as difficult as the eradication of a deep-rooted weed from the soil of a neglected garden. To regard the *Senorita* as a sentient being would have been the height of folly, but I was unfeignedly glad to learn that Dr. Williamson, her new owner, had sailed her away before my arrival at Falmouth. Her silent reproach would have spoiled the whole of my summer holiday.

The *Winnie's* name lacks distinction, and her ugliness is only, in a measure, redeemed by her obvious power. It was long before I felt for her the affection that I had felt for the old *Senorita*. But love at first sight does not invariably last. The *Winnie*, with her comfort below and her sterling good qualities at sea, won in the end that sincere affection which a sensible man feels for a plain but competent wife. Beauty, at its best, is only skin deep, and frequently conceals detestable vices. Many a beautiful woman makes an abominable help-meet, many a pretty yacht proves but a painted coffin. Like the *Senorita*, I was growing old myself. Gone for ever were the spareness of frame and nimbleness of foot that had marked my earlier years. Though my tailor, with the plausible obsequiousness of his tribe, refused to brand as stout a man whose chest measurement exceeded by three inches his girth about the middle, I knew I might soon be singing with Lady Jane in *Patience*:

"There will be too much of me  
In the coming by and bye."

It was a great comfort to find that there was little need on the *Winnie* of the acrobatic skill below or of the amphibious life on deck which the *Senorita* demanded



The *Humic*, close-hauled

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## The "Winnie"

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of her crew when she was enjoying a hard thrash to windward through a heavy sea. Moreover, despite her want of comeliness, the *Winnie* never failed to attract attention in whatever port she happened to be lying, either at home or abroad. A first glance showed that she was a vessel built for hard service and to face bad weather. Comeliness attracts the careless eye; seaworthiness wins the approval of the genuine cruiser. After all, as Goldsmith says :

" Handsome is that handsome does "



# THE LAND OF MANTILLA AND FAN

# THE LAND OF MANTILLA AND FAN

1911

## I

L'ABERWRACH : CAMARET.

Fair stood the wind for France  
When we our sails advance,  
Nor now to prove our chance  
Longer will tarry.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

A BIGGER boat meant a more audacious cruise. But whither? Which of us, Duncan or myself, first suggested Spain cannot now be recalled. Possibly the idea occurred to both simultaneously. Anyway, Spain was soon decided upon as an end interesting in itself and distant enough to be worthy of attainment. We had been on the coast of Brittany the previous year, and had found smooth waters and a genial climate. Our slight acquaintance was sufficient to convince us that the Bay of Biscay had been the victim of malignant defamation, that, at least, its evil reputation was not entirely deserved. The voyage to Spain would enable Duncan—known on board as the navigator—to put to practical use the art of navigation in which, theoretically, he was unusually skilled. A third hand soon volunteered. C. A. Eves—the steward—though not unacquainted with yachting, disclaimed all knowledge of the sea and professed little enthusiasm for the actual voyage; but he was eager to revisit Spain, a country the charm of which he was never weary of extolling.

Shortly before the start a fourth man unexpectedly applied for a berth on board. D. E. Bell, an old pupil, wanted a month's cruising and did not care whither he went. Though much the youngest, he was by far the biggest of the party. Of course he was known as the boy. The navigator opined that we were a crew of three bald-headed coots and one young gull adventuring forth to seek castles in Spain. From time to time the navigator startles his intimate friends by the prettiness of his wit.

Though the crew could not join till the 1st of August, I journeyed to Falmouth on 28th July. I suspected that there would be much to be done before the yacht was ready for sea. Nor was my suspicion unfounded. I had a very busy time and she was fully ready only a few hours before the crew was due to arrive. Her cabin, compared with the *Senorita's*, was so big that my body seemed lost in its roominess. My head, too, missed the beam that it was wont too often to rap. But it soon found a substitute in a different position. The mainbeam, crossing between the fore end of the cabin and the alley-way to the fo'c'sle, was a regular deathtrap. Not a day passed throughout the cruise without one or other of the ship's company butting it full tilt. It caused an amount of eloquence that was positively appalling.

The journey by rail had upset the internal organism of a new barometer. It pointed to 29.1 and refused to move. A jeweller in the town relieved temporarily an obscure malady. The lamps of the full-sized dioptric side-lights burned paraffin but required chimneys and were not windproof. Their burners were replaced by Barton Burners. The position of the binnacle proved a problem difficult to solve. The top of the cabin head, where the previous owner had carried his compass,

seemed an impossible place, for, besides being too exposed, it was far too high for comfortable inspection. Eventually, a stout plank was run from coaming to coaming, at the fore end of the cockpit, with the binnacle fixed in the middle. The arrangement had its drawbacks. It still placed the binnacle too high for the convenient reading of the compass from the tiller, and turned easy communication with the cabin into a difficult and undignified crawl.

Our intention was to sail direct across the Bay to Ferrol or Coruña. As, however, it was not unlikely that we might be driven to the French coast before we made a Spanish port, a Bill of Health was secured from the Custom House for Brest as well as one for Ferrol, and taken to the office of the gentleman who acted as Vice-Consul for both countries for his official *visa*.

The 1st August came and found the *Winnie* with water and stores on board all ready for an immediate start. My hardly earned leisure was spent in meditating upon the chances of the approaching trip. No apprehension about its risk or doubt of its successful accomplishment disturbed the tranquillity of my mind. Most of my relations and friends had heard of our intended voyage with such undisguised scepticism about its feasibility, or such strongly worded advice to give up the idea of so foolhardy an adventure, that the words of the Sergeant in the *Pirates of Penzance* occurred to me again and again :

“ They lay too great a stress  
On the dangers that oppress,  
With a reference, alack !  
To the chance of coming back.”

But dissuasion only strengthened our determination to carry out the project.

The boy arrived in the afternoon. The navigator and steward were to reach Falmouth together by a late train from town. In good time I paddled ashore, not to Mr. Jackett's yard, which was closed, but to some steps beside it and served by the same passage from a lofty street. My wait was long. Lingered dusk faded into sombre night; public-houses ejected the last of their customers; passing wayfarers grew rare and, finally, came to an end; silence and sleep settled down upon the town. The world had been long left to darkness and to me when, shortly before midnight, an asthmatic steed painfully dragged to the hill-top an ancient cab overweighted by my friends and their multifarious luggage. Then after brief greetings began the perilous descent to the dinghy.

Mr. Jackett's yard, as might be expected, lies close by the water's edge. To reach it from the land, however, the would-be visitor must first scale, with firm-set foot and heaving chest, the steepest hill in Falmouth. The summit won and breath regained, he descends some steps, passes through an arch beneath a house, and finds before him a steep and uneven passage, bounded by lofty walls and crossed at irregular intervals by a series of rude steps. These were, evidently, placed there in days of old by kindly hands to save unwary strangers from too rapid a descent, from, in fact, the fate of the Gadarene swine, which, we read, rushed down a steep place violently into the sea and were forthwith drowned. Difficult by daylight, the passage is almost dangerous in the dark.

As best acquainted with the place I volunteered to guide the navigator to the dinghy while the steward remained in the street to guard the bulk of the baggage. The beginning of our journey, faintly lighted by a street-lamp, was easily accomplished, but, when once we had

passed through the arch, we had no gleam of light of any kind to help our hesitating feet. Beneath us lay a well of pitch-like blackness. Vergil's words fitted the occasion :

ubi caelum condidit umbra  
Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.\*

The navigator, fortunately—for he was carrying sextant and chronometer—came to a halt with a stifled ejaculation, “The yawning mouth of hell!” With a bag in each hand, cautiously, inch by inch I felt my way, and wondered why I did not find beneath my feet the three or four steps with which the descent began. Suddenly I stepped upon nothing and fell a fathom with a sickening crash. By daylight we discovered that I had kept too much to the left and passed along a short broad ledge jutting out from the wall. The abrupt termination of the ledge brought about my headlong fall.

A whole myriad of stars flashed before my eyes, every bone in my body was painfully jarred. I lay in a heap for a moment wondering what had happened, but feeling, on the whole, more angry than hurt. “What is it, skipper? Are you damaged?” asked the navigator anxiously.

“I’ve lost my bally hat!” I replied irrelevantly. More anxious about my hat than about my body, I picked myself up, scrambled recklessly downwards, searched for and found my missing headgear, and reached the boat without further adventure. An occupant of a neighbouring house, roused by the noise of my fall, appeared upon the scene. With his help and the expenditure of many matches, the baggage was safely conveyed to the dinghy, and, in a couple of trips, transported to the yacht. The navigator and steward, drawing freely

\* Aen. VI. 271. When Jupiter has shrouded heaven in shadow, and black Night has stolen the colour from Nature's face.—*Comington's Translation.*

upon unexpected stores of imagination, recounted to the astonished boy how his skipper had fallen ten feet and rebounded into the air with the resilience of a tennis-ball. A bruised elbow comprised the sum total of my hurts. The bag in either hand, possibly, broke my fall, but my escape from serious injury partook of the miraculous.

*Wednesday, August 2* Our departure was delayed by various little hindrances till the afternoon. After considerable discussion the box containing the chronometer (hired from Messrs Hughes and Son) was screwed down to the after end of the port locker. This proved to be a suitable situation. The space between the box and the yacht's side was very convenient for the stowage of sailing directions, books of tables, parallel rulers and other aids to navigation. They were always at hand and firmly established in the worst of weather. Moreover, whoever tidied up the cabin found the space a useful receptacle for stray pipes and mislaid match boxes. A lost pipe was sure to be there, and, at night, when the man at the tiller had used up all his matches, he had only to slip a hand behind the box to find a further supply.

The navigator, to check the chronometer, insisted upon remaining at our moorings till, at 1 p m, the time ball fell on the summit of Pendennis. Thereafter, we set about getting under way. The jib-headed mizen was found to be a shapeless bit of a sail, but the rest of the canvas proved to be entirely satisfactory. A strong S S W. wind was blowing and a reef was tied down in the mainsail. That hoisted, the next business was to stow the (pram) dinghy. The *Winnie's* deck room appeared to be so much larger than the *Senorita's* that we had never anticipated any difficulty with the boat, or indeed considered at all the question of its

stowage. Now we found to our dismay that, owing to the width of the cabin-head, no berth could be found for it anywhere on deck. I was gazing at the cabin-head and the dinghy with equal hostility when the boy suggested trying the top of the cabin-head. It seemed to be the unlikeliest of places, scarcely worth trying, in fact. But what was our surprise and relief to find that the capsized boat lay there just clear of the boom! The boy was the possessor of a discerning eye. He took the praise we showered upon him with a modesty that became his 20 years. The boat was a serious obstruction to the helmsman's view, but it was a lesser evil on the cabin-head than astern of the yacht. A towed dinghy is a heavy drag and a constant anxiety. In any case, the idea of towing a pram across the Bay of Biscay was absolutely preposterous. The halyards were new and the little jib went up with many turns twisted in the head, but we slipped our moorings, careless of critical eyes or contemptuous remarks, and hurried away to confront the unknown.

We went no great distance that afternoon. A brief experience of conditions outside sent us flying into Helford River. The sea was heavy, and the force and contrariety of the wind precluded the possibility of any progress in the desired direction. It would be well, too, to allow the yacht's topsides to tighten, and the crew to shake together before the voyage was really commenced. Our anchors looked poor things. They were sufficiently heavy to handle, but exceedingly short in the shank. The *Winnie*, so far as could be judged from a short trial, was a good sea-boat, but a tendency to carry a strong lee helm was more than a little disconcerting. The surroundings of Helford River are usually beautiful, but they looked gloomy enough this evening beneath a lowering sky and a drizzling rain.



The fine settled weather of the previous month was, we feared, completely broken up.

*Thursday, August 3.* The weather showed little improvement, but at 10 30 a.m., under a single reefed mainsail, mizen and staysail, we ran out of the river with the idea rather of learning the ways of the new ship than of making serious progress on our projected trip. As the yacht seemed to require little headsail, no jib was set. The wind W S W was strong and gusty. There seemed to be small chance of getting a slant to carry us to Ferrol. A board inshore brought the yacht under Beast Point. We found that she headed S.S.W. on starboard tack. As on this bearing she would fetch Ushant, we determined to cross to the French coast rather than lose time in waiting for a favourable wind to carry us to Spain direct.

We took our departure from the Lizard at 3 30 p.m. The navigator produced and put overboard a small log of American make. A light metal rotator is attached by a few fathoms of thin line to a case about the size of an ordinary watch. Inside the case are invisible works. On the face are three dials showing respectively the number of 10 knots, knots and tenths of a knot run. It cannot be set at will, but, as each 100 miles is run off, the pointers all spring back to zero and start afresh. In spite of a somewhat flimsy construction and a few obvious defects it proved an eminently efficient little instrument and was a source of great delight to all the crew. A companionable little toad! we thought it. In the silence of the night watches the click it gave from time to time helped the slow hours along wonderfully, and assured the man in charge that the yacht was going ahead.

There was no great weight in the wind, but a nasty lumpy sea knocked the yacht about with a malicious

disregard for our material well-being. The night came down with a wild and threatening look. At dusk the side-lights were lighted and the starboard one shipped. Neither persuasion nor force could fix the port light on its iron in the light-board. Examination by daylight showed that the wood had warped so badly that there was insufficient space left for the lantern to slip down the iron. The starboard light refused to burn. The absence of side-lights did not trouble us very greatly. We kept the riding-light burning in the cockpit to show at need

What broke our hearts was the binnacle lamp. At its top there is a dome which can be tightened or loosened to regulate the admission of air. The lamp refused to burn more than a few minutes at a stretch. The first time it went out, thinking that too great a draught was reaching the flame, we screwed down the dome several turns tighter. On the second occasion the dome was screwed down altogether. Again the light flickered out. Then a towel was wrapped round the lamp with equal ill success.

Finally, resisting with difficulty an impulse to heave the lamp overboard, we steered by a star, with an occasional examination of the compass to see that we were not wandering seriously from the proper course. What the light wanted, as we discovered afterwards, was not less air but a greater supply. We killed the flame by depriving it of its indispensable oxygen. A few experiments showed that the lamp, treated with consideration, burned brightly whatever the conditions of wind and weather.

The struggle with the lights upset the stomachs of the entire crew. The navigator himself, who seldom succumbs to the most nauseating motion, was as gloriously sea-sick as any one of the rest. Even the following

impromptu, turned out by the poet of the party, signally failed to alleviate the general wretchedness :

Oh, what a horrible joke to be crossing  
The channel at night with the little waves tossing,  
The lights all out and the crew all as sick as —  
'Tis the devil's own chance if a steamer don't nick us !

The reader will not be surprised to learn that the author insists upon the strict suppression of his identity.

*Friday, August 4.* From midnight onwards the yacht barely headed her course. At 8 a.m. the log registered 56.8 miles. An early observation for longitude put us considerably W. of the direct course to Ushant. To be a bit to windward is always good, and, on this occasion, it was particularly fortunate, because at 8.30 a.m. the wind drew so far ahead that the yacht would lie up no higher than S. by E. By 11 a.m. the wind was much lighter. The crew's stomachs began to recover tone. We pulled ourselves together, shook out the reef and set a jib. A grey morning turned into a perfect day with a bright sun, a nice breeze and a gently heaving sea. The yacht's head came up in time to S. by W. There was some haze on the horizon, yet before 1 p.m. land was undoubtedly in sight.

It could not be identified. We felt sure that it was not Ushant. Our course for the last five hours had been taking us E. of the island, and the land before us was low. At 3 p.m. we found the Porsal Rocks immediately ahead. Two of us had been near these rocks before, on the first occasion at night, on the second, in a dense fog. We might therefore be pardoned for not recognizing them immediately. The yacht was thrown upon the port tack. Our first intention was to beat through the Four channel to Camaret. But the W. running tide was on the point of changing and L'Aberwrach lay a few miles off dead to leeward. We

changed our minds, put the helm up, squared away the boom and ran down the wind, rejoicing in the anticipation of a sound sleep after the wakeful hours of the previous night.

L'Aberwrach in clear weather is quite an easy harbour to take, though the man who is making his first entrance may well believe that instant destruction will be the fate of his hapless vessel. The coast hereabouts consists of a line of low hills fronted by an amazing tangle of far projecting rocks and reefs. The discovery of the passage between them constitutes the chief difficulty to be faced by a stranger. The first mark to find is the lighthouse on Ile Vierge. It is a lofty, cylindrical, grey, granite shaft. Close beside it still stands the short square tower of the old lighthouse. With this mark to assist his search, the voyager will easily find further inland two leading lighthouses backed by a church tower standing high on the top of a hill. These three kept in line lead (S E by E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E) to the first beacon, the Petit Pot de Beurre. Thence the channel onwards, S.E. by E., is easy to see and is also furnished with a second pair of leading lighthouses.

Though it was low water, we ran in with confidence—with over confidence perhaps, for which we paid the appropriate penalty. The yacht abreast of the village caught her heel in the mud on the E. side of the river. When the tide rose, she came off undamaged and was soon safely moored a little way above the mole. We had hoisted the red ensign as we entered to show that we hailed from across the sea. Two men tried to board the yacht, pointing to the ensign and calling out “Pilote!” They were received with such emphatic shouts of “Non!” that they sheered off precipitately.

While I remained on board to fill the office of cook, the rest hurried ashore, taking with them the ship's

papers to meet the possible demands of inquisitive douaniers. Vergil's familiar lines seemed appropriate to their instant landing:

Magno telluris amore  
Egressi optata potiuntur Troes arena.\*

The barometer was again sulky · it stuck at 29.1 with inflexible obstinacy. The rest of the cruise was performed without the assistance of a barometer. At every port we intended either to have it repaired or to purchase another, but we always found ourselves at sea again with our good intentions still unfulfilled.

*Saturday, August 5.* A hard S W wind detained the yacht at her anchorage. My inclination kept me on board as caretaker, but the other three, filled with a burning desire to explore, lost no time in landing. They took the train—which considerably waited several minutes past scheduled time when they were sighted hurrying to the station—to Plabennec, and walked six miles to Folgoët to inspect its church. From there they walked on to Lesneven. A vehicle of sorts carried them to Lannilis. Thence, on foot once more, they reached L'Aberwrach just in time for table d'hôte dinner at the hotel near the pier. From their long day's outing they gained, if nothing else, an insatiable appetite and an outrageous thirst.

*Sunday, August 6.* The wind inside, W.S.W., was very strong, but with one reef in the mainsail and with no jib set, the yacht was worked out of the river just before high water. We were outside, clear of all dangers, by 1.30 p.m. At sea it was a beautiful day, with only a light wind—and that in our teeth. The tide, we calculated, by 2 p.m. ought to be running S.W. But

\* Aenid I 171 With intense yearning for dry land the Trojans disembark, and take possession of the wished-for shore—*Conington's Translation*

we made very slow progress, and, if the tide was in our favour at all, it was marvellously weak. It was 6 p.m. before we weathered the Porsal Rocks. At 9 p.m. we were off the Four lighthouse, a circular grey tower set upon an isolated black rock. We were well to windward, with a gentle breeze good enough to allow the yacht to lay her course, but a tide of considerable velocity was beginning to pour against her, and we had little hope that she could, during the next six hours, at her best, do more than hold her own. However, by 11 p.m. we had dragged past the small red beacon-tower which, with a green light, marks the hidden dangers of the Platresses reef, and at midnight were heading S. in the line of the powerful leading lights.

*Monday, August 7* At 3 a.m., when the tide was about to come in our favour, the yacht had reached the neighbourhood of La Grande Vinotière, a fine octagonal red and black structure carrying a fixed white light of insignificant power. How she had arrived there it was difficult to say, for of wind there had been, since midnight, scarcely a breath. A beautiful morning followed a beautiful night. At 5 a.m., aided by a faint S. draught, the yacht passed Les Vieux Moines, off Point St Mathieu, and was headed S.E. by E. across the Brest estuary for Camaret bay, where anchor was cast at 9.30 a.m. far enough inside the mole to gain shelter, but not so far in as to be hampered by sardine boats and cray-fish smacks. From the sailing directions one would gather that the Chenal du Four bristles with difficulties. As a matter of fact, it is so well buoyed and lighted, and the currents run through so fairly, that, on trial, all the expected difficulties are found to disappear in succession.

That evening we dined at the Hôtel de France, and

renewed acquaintance with the buxom head waitress, our old friend Céleste. Camaret is a jolly little place, crowded in August with visitors, French and English. We left the dinghy at the head of the lifeboat slip, but aware, through painful experience,\* of the thievish propensities of the fisher-folk, we carried the oars and row-locks round the harbour and stored them in the buvette adjoining the hotel.

\* See "Coastwise-Cross-seas,"<sup>22</sup> pages 280-283.

## II

### BELLE ISLE : SANTONA

In the Bay of Biscay O !

OLD SONG

*Tuesday, August 8.* The steward and the boy slept on the cabin lockers. They often expressed appreciation of the kindness which assigned to the least experienced the arriest quarters. Had they but known the comfort of the fo'c'sle cots they might well have doubted whether the apparent benevolence was not, in reality, unblushing selfishness. Anyway, occupation of the cabin was accompanied by the disadvantage of being called upon to carry out behests issued by the ruling powers in the fo'c'sle. It was yet early morning when a voice from forward cried -

" Boy ! "

" Hullo ! "

" Poke your nose out and see what the weather is doing."

Carefully the boy withdrew his big limbs from beneath the blankets—why upset their cunning arrangement ? he might be lucky enough to creep back again to their warm recesses before long—and wriggled out beneath the binnacle into the cockpit. In a few seconds his voice was heard.

" I say, skipper ! "

" I'm listening—get the worst of the trouble off your chest ! "



“ The wind is due East ”

A fair wind ! What a change the boy's few words effected ! Where had been peaceful slumber, now orderly bustle reigned A hasty plunge overboard, a perfunctory towelling, a rapid garbing—and the yacht was away by 6 a m. under full lower canvas

To the vessel bound to the south-westward several short cuts are open between the reefs that encumber the waters lying W and S. of the Brest estuary We took the one immediately under the land, the Toulinguet Passage, which opens out between Toulinguet Point, the extremity of the Toulinguet peninsula, and the Toulinguet Rocks. The last are a remarkably picturesque group, buttressed, pinnacled, and arched. Indeed, the rock scenery about Toulinguet Point is sufficiently varied to please the most exacting fancy. With the off-shore wind the water was smooth and the passage easy. Under the lash of a westerly gale, one could easily imagine the passage to be both lively and dangerous. An infatuation for nosing about among strange rocks had never been one of my marked peculiarities, and my mind was much happier when the yacht had cleared them all and, with a good S E wind broad abeam, was racing onwards towards the Raz de Sein.

From the W point of the S shores of Douarnenez Bay projects directly seaward for 12 miles the accumulation of islets, rocks and reefs, known to English seamen as the Saints, to the French as the Chaussée de Sein. This long obstruction is separated from the mainland by the Raz de Sein, a narrow channel notorious for its fierce tides and dangerous seas. Under the favourable conditions of slack water or of wind and tide going in the same direction, the passage in daylight may be taken with confidence, and, thanks to a cunning system of

guiding lights, with perhaps even greater confidence after darkness has fallen. Still, the multitude of instructions to be found in the sailing directions gives the man who approaches the Raz for the first time plenty to think about, and makes him anticipate what lies before him with pardonable anxiety.

The day was started early, but not early enough by an hour. We were just too late to carry the last of the ebb through. The tide was on the point of making against the yacht as she passed Trevennec Island—a rocky lump at the N. end conveniently situated to support one of the many lighthouses with which the Raz is equipped. Still, the tides were neap, there was a strong free breeze, and we determined, at least, to try to force a passage. At first things went well. We pushed ahead without a check and had every hope of succeeding in our efforts to pass the Vieille lighthouse and the beacon tower on La Plate rock, which, standing not far apart, together mark the S. extremity of the Raz. Unfortunately, at the critical moment, the wind lulled and drew ahead. The yacht actually passed the lighthouse, but, headed now somewhat athwart the tide, she was swept with alarming rapidity towards the Pont des Chattes, an extensive reef that bounds the S.W. end of the channel. The wind fell very light and, near as we had come to success, we were obliged, in the end, to abandon our attempt. The set of the currents forms one of the chief difficulties of the Raz. They do not run fairly through, but vary their direction at different stages of the tide. At all times they seem to sweep diagonally upon the variety of ugly rocks that form the outposts of the Chaussée de Sein. The rapid tide and a faint S. draught swept us speedily back into Douarnenez Bay.

Here we lay to till the return of slack water. Only with difficulty was the *Winnie* persuaded to curb her

impatience. A fine breeze sprang up which she evidently thought ought not to be wasted. With the staysail a-weather and the jib sheets flying she acknowledged no check, but sailed along the coast like a fretful steed disdaining to notice a restraining curb. By taking off the jib, hauling the staysail only a shade to windward of amidships, and lashing the tiller a-lee, we managed at last to moderate her ill-timed celerity.

At 3 p.m., with a strong S. wind, we hauled round the Basse Jaune buoy, and, on port tack, at dead low water fetched through the Raz. At 3 30 p.m. we passed once more the Vieille lighthouse. Though it was as smooth as a pond and no difficulty was experienced on our second attempt, we bade farewell to the Raz de Sein with undisguised feelings of relief. The wind soon fell very light. On starboard tack, sweltering in the heat, we went drifting across Audierne Bay, past a stretch of coast that looked barren and void of distinctive charm.

A man's future is often decided by mere trivialities. The discovery that our bread had all gone mouldy modified, in a measure, the direction of the cruise. Water had somehow reached our bread—and bread, as Swift wisely remarks, is the staff of life. Without a fresh supply a voyage of several days' duration could not well be undertaken. Biscuits there were on board in plenty, but biscuits, morning, noon and night, did not as a diet appeal to the crew's dainty appetites. Moreover, hard tack is trying to middle-aged teeth. From the first the steward had urged us to aim at Bilbao rather than at Ferrol. At the former English friends of his resided, while the latter he stigmatized as something more hopeless than the back of beyond. Now he pressed his preference for Bilbao with even greater warmth. "Ferrol!" he cried, "chuck it, boys, chuck it! My

friends will make us as welcome as the flowers that blow in the spring, tra-la ! and will give us a bully time, too—you can bet your bottom dollar on *that* ! Let us get across these weary waters as quickly as we can, and enjoy a few days of high living and poor thinking ! ”

We all suspected—wrongly, as we had reason to think later—that there must be some feminine attraction to impassion his eloquence, but his burning desire had a backing of reason. For one thing, a week of our time had passed without bringing us any nearer to Ferrol. For another, the chance of finding friends in a foreign country was not to be lightly neglected. His wishes were agreed to without much opposition. It was decided to call at Belle Isle to replace our damaged bread and thence, if possible, to make to Bilbao a continuous run.

All the early evening, the calm remained unbroken. There was sufficient tidal swabble to roll the yacht about uncomfortably and to keep the canvas clattering with tiresome reiteration. At dark a N.W. breeze came strong enough to quiet the sails and restore steerage way. The yacht was headed S. to give to the dreaded Pen Marc'h Point a sufficiently wide berth.

*Wednesday, August 9.* By midnight there was a slightly better breeze, but the yacht was closely enveloped in the folds of a dense fog. Her head was put S.S.E. At 3 a.m., so far as could be judged by the sound of its siren, we were abreast of the point, but not till 5.30 a.m. were we confident enough of being clear of Pen Marc'h and its outlying dangers to put the yacht S.E. on her course for Belle Isle. This turning a corner of a coast in a fog, when nothing whatever can be seen and only the moan of a siren is heard, may easily lead to difficulty or disaster. If the turn is made too soon, the vessel runs ashore, if too late, she runs wide of her course.

A beautiful day came. Under all sail the *Winnie* slipped quietly along over perfectly smooth water at a pace of 3 to 4 miles an hour with the wind hovering between N N W and W. by N. We were unable to find on board the spinnaker mentioned in the inventory of the yacht's canvas. It was wanted badly to-day—indeed, nearly every day of the rest of the cruise. The sun soon ate up the denser fog, leaving only a light haze to veil the horizon.

At 4 p.m. Belle Isle was sighted. To an eye scanning it from the sea it presents the general appearance of a low tableland. At 6 p.m. the wind was falling very light and the yacht had not yet quite reached the island. A strong tide was sweeping her back and big rollers coming up astern shook out of the sails the trifle of wind they were able to catch. But, at last, a little stronger breeze from W carried her under shelter of the land into smooth water. At 8.30 p.m. a smart wind E. by N. hurried us past the lighthouse on the Ile des Poulains. At 10 p.m. we brought up in Le Palais Roads, off the entrance to the harbour, as near in as we dared to go in the dark. Till we went to bed, the yacht lay as quietly as could be hoped for in an open roadstead, but, when once we had turned in, a stiff N. breeze sent her careering wildly over a weather tide.

*Thursday, August 10.* Consequently we spent an entirely uncomfortable night, and, before we tackled the preparation of breakfast, the yacht was shifted to a more sheltered berth closer under the land. But our labour, as it turned out, was needless, for soon the waters of the roads became glassy calm, only fitful draughts raised momentary ripples, and the sun blazed out with almost tropical heat. Over the E. pier of the harbour were visible the masts of several yachts lying with an anchor ahead and a stern-rope to the shore. As we

intended to make no stay, we were not tempted to enter what could fall but little short of a veritable inferno. The others went ashore to market, and returned at noon laden with supplies of bread and eggs. They reported Le Palais to be a little place reeking of fish and languid from heat, but crowded with trippers brought by excursion boats across from the mainland. They had taken the yacht's papers ashore in case of need, but no official was met to question them or to enquire about the yacht.

A steady N breeze was blowing and by 1 p.m. the yacht, under all plain sail, was again on her way. The waters between the island and the mainland were everywhere crowded with fishing craft, taking advantage of the newly arisen wind to land their catches on the wharves of Le Palais. At 2 p.m. the black buoy off Kerdonis Point, the E extremity of the island, was left astern. We put the log over and headed the yacht S. by W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. for Bilbao, lying more than 240 miles ahead. The distance was trifling, appearances all indicated a spell of settled weather, Spain seemed to be, at last, drawing within our reach. We were a cheerful company.

The world of waters is our home  
And merry men are we !

But a calm we ran into, before the yacht was well clear of the island, changed our merriment to wistfulness, and an inclination to sing into ill-suppressed tendency to growl. The calm held us up for two hours. Then a fresh W. breeze urged the yacht along, for a time, at the respectable speed of 6 miles an hour.

The last few days, owing to the heat, the crew had suffered greatly from thirst. The sparklet-siphon—blessed invention!—had been in constant use. Under the action, apparently, of zinc, the water in the tank had assumed a milky white colour. Aerated in the

siphon it recovered its clearness. In our ignorance of chemical science we drank the water unhesitatingly without any idea of the danger of zinc-poisoning. The water tasted all right in spite of its colour, and did no harm to any of the drinkers.

As dusk approached the wind fell very light. Soon after 9 p.m. a smart breeze from N.E. improved the yacht's pace. At midnight, when only a faint draught was filling our sails, the log registered 37.9 miles.

*Friday, August 11.* The draught drew ahead, and for a short time the yacht would not quite lay her course. At 0.20 a.m. a steady W. wind blew up unexpectedly, but it was dying away rapidly, when, at 3 a.m., the boy took charge. Two hours later my pleasant slumbers were rudely broken by a shout. "Skipper, come up! the mainsheet has broken adrift from the boom." His startling information hurried all the sleepers to the deck. We found the boom right off against the port rigging, and the mainsheet with the upper block trailing astern in the water. It was at once discovered that the pin had disappeared which fastened the block to an iron collar round the end of the boom. The nut had evidently worked off. As soon as that was gone, there was nothing to prevent the pin from shaking into the water. Fortunately the wind was at the moment very light. First the boom was got under command. We passed a couple of turns about it with a spare rope and made fast to each quarter. Then a keen search was inaugurated to find a piece of metal to replace the loss. After much rummaging about a spare belaying pin was found, which, by the greatest good luck, proved an unsurpassable substitute.

At 6.45 a.m. the yacht had made by log 54.4 miles. For the next two hours she was off her course heading S.W. on port tack. Then a gentle W.S.W. breeze came.

On starboard tack she looked at her course with a suspicion of coyness. At 8.30 a.m. the log registered 56 miles. By 10.30 a.m. there was not the faintest flutter in the air. We seized the opportunity of the calm to bathe. These bathes in the middle of the Bay were most enjoyable. The water was, perhaps, too warm to be really invigorating, but to dive deep into the pure depths, to open eyes beneath to a circumambient environment of astonishing azure, to feel the warm planks beneath bare feet, to dry in a leisurely fashion and enjoy a sun-bath—all gave a sense of a *joie de vivre* rarely experienced even by the healthiest mortals.

For four hours there was hardly a breath of air to stir the sluggish atmosphere. The sun blazed down from a cloudless sky, and we panted in the scorching heat. Below, the cabin was an unbearable oven; on deck, the sun's fierce rays could scarcely be endured. Like the face of a huge mirror, the glassy surface of the ocean reflected towards the heavens the dazzling sunlight. A slight roll but uplifted the water without breaking its tranquillity. There was not enough motion to keep our canvas shaking. The *Winnie* lay:

As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean

At noon the log's record was 61 miles; at 2.30 p.m. it was 61.4 miles. An anxious eye was kept upon the movements of the porpoises. My old shipmate, Dr. Williamson, had a theory, a memory from his seafaring days, that, in a calm, a porpoise always headed in the direction from which the new wind would certainly arrive. Incredulous as we were of their ability to see the wind—a power commonly attributed to pigs alone—we noted with satisfaction that the porpoises to-day were all heading N.W. But when, at 2.30 p.m., a breeze came from N.W. strong enough to set the yacht moving,



our former incredulity was promptly converted to a blind belief in the perspicacity of the porpoise tribe.\* The wind blew very gently. At 6 p.m. the log registered only 67.5 miles.

As dusk approached the wind improved, and a grateful coolness brought comfort to our sun-baked bodies. The glorious day was closed by a very unpromising sunset. So greasy and menacing was the appearance of the sky, as the sun sank behind an ugly bank of clouds, that, before dark, as a matter of precaution, we took off the jib and pulled down the topsail. From 9 p.m. to midnight the yacht was in my charge. The steward, for an hour, bore me company, not so much to enjoy my conversation as to avoid the cabin, which he likened to the fiery furnace prepared by King Darius for Daniel and his companions. The rising moon wore a very sickly look. Far away in the S.E. the horizon was lighted by frequent flashes of lightning. Scarcely had the steward gone below than I called him up again, bidding him bring our oilies, and stand by in case a second hand was required on deck. A tremendous thunderstorm was coming up rapidly from S.E., and seemed likely to pass exactly over the yacht. All preparations were made to meet a heavy squall, but, curiously, the storm worked away to N parallel to our course, without drawing appreciably nearer to the yacht. The N.W. wind, without a sign of faltering, drove us steadily on our course. To the W., out of a cloudless sky, the placid stars poured down their soft radiance on a twinkling sea, to the E. the heavens

\* "There exists a popular idea among seamen that the wind may be expected from the quarter to which a shoal of porpoises is observed to steer. But I expect their capacity as meteorologists is about on a par with that of geese, the value of whose flights is held by many worthy and venerable matrons to be pretty nearly as well established as the fact of hogs actually seeing the wind."—"Voyages and Travels of Captain Basil Hall," chap. 42

were enwrapped in a pall of inkiest blackness, gashed every instant by blinding flames of quivering brilliancy that darted hither and thither, intersected often each other's flight, and lent to the night the momentary brightness of broad daylight. The downward flashes were like the vicious stabs of a devil's dagger driven into the back of a writhing sinner    The sight was fascinating :

Brief as the lightning in the collied night,  
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,  
And, ere a man hath power to say, Behold !  
The jaws of darkness do devour it up \*

“ Beats the Crystal Palace and Brock's benefits ! ” the steward thought    Louder and louder rattled the thunder. When, for a brief moment, the turmoil ceased, and the quiet splash of water at the yacht's bow became audible, we braced ourselves to endure the ear-shattering clap that a few seconds would bring to shake the firmament    For two hours the *Winne* ran close along the edge of the storm, and we began to hope that she might miss it altogether. But in this we were disappointed. Just before my spell at the tiller was finished, the N.W. wind expired abruptly    The mainsail gave a sluggish flap, and immediately gybed over, influenced by a gentle N.E. draught. The navigator had slept calmly through the racket    Called up to relieve the helm, he was frankly incredulous of anything more serious than an ordinary thunderstorm, and regarded our description of the lightning as foolish extravagance. At midnight the log registered 86 miles

*Saturday, August 12.*    Soon heavy rain and a smart N.E. wind came together. Neither lasted more than a few minutes. As soon as we had passed through the tail of the storm, we found again the wind N.W., but considerably lighter. At 3 a.m. the log gave 95 7 miles

\* Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I., scene 1.

At 6 a.m. there was a fine breeze, and the yacht was travelling fast. At 8.20 a.m. we had run off 117 miles. This morning was not so bright as yesterday and, in consequence, less distressing. The air, freshened by the heavy rain, was pleasantly cool, and cloud, from time to time, concealed the face of the sun and mollified the vehemence of its scorching heat. The wind soon fell light.

At noon the log registered 129.7 miles. Shortly afterwards the yacht's course was changed to S.S.W., for the navigator, on working out the morning and meridian sights, found her position to be 8 miles too far to the E. All the afternoon a steady N.W. to N.N.W. breeze carried us along at nearly 6 miles an hour. From a good observation for longitude, obtained at 5 p.m., the yacht was found to have made up the necessary westing and was put again upon her original course S. by W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. She was distant from Bilbao by observation 88, by log 93 miles. Till 8 p.m. the breeze retained its satisfactory strength, but an hour later died away to a gentle breathing. At that time the log registered 162.6 miles. Its record had increased only to 166.1 miles by midnight.

*Sunday, August 13.* Till 6 a.m. there was no wind. Thereafter, till 10 a.m., a little air E.N.E. gave us steerage way. This flickered out, and for hours the yacht lay helpless in the flattest of flat calms. The water was so smooth that the canvas hung motionless. A fresh packet of matches was drawn from stores for general use. They proved to be damp, and only about one in four responded to the igniting stroke. The steward advised a rapid passing of the business end of the match through the hair a few times before striking. This manoeuvre was not without a measure of success, but success depended largely upon the amount of hair still left on the

striker's head, and whether the remainder of his youthful crop were dry or saturated with perspiration.

Two mild excitements this morning broke the monotony of the voyage. A little land-bird appeared on board. The steward thought it was a siskin. There had been a noticeable lack of bird life all the way from Belle Isle, and this little chap roused ridiculous interest. It took no notice of the dainties spread out for its delectation, but investigated fearlessly every corner of our decks, and showed its independence of a firm foothold by perching on the log-line, the bumpkin boom, the jib sheet and other insecure and unstable places of rest. It disappeared suddenly and we saw it no more. Next, with a yell of "Sail ho!" the boy called our attention to a clump of fishing boats he had sighted far off in the S.E. Their rig was peculiar. They carried two lugs, the fore one very small, the after one very big. We gathered from later observation that the small lug forward was the storm sail pressed into service in light weather. The appearance of the bird and of the boats seemed to indicate the nearness of land.

At 1.30 p.m. the calm was broken by an air from right ahead. This soon veered to W. and grew into a fine breeze. The sun was not visible at noon, but at 2 p.m. it shone out long enough for the navigator to obtain its altitude. At 3.18 p.m. the log marked 200 miles. At that moment the navigator, by using a Marc St. Hilaire line, crossed by the morning's sight, calculated that the yacht was 33 miles from Bilbao, but 12 miles too far to the westward.

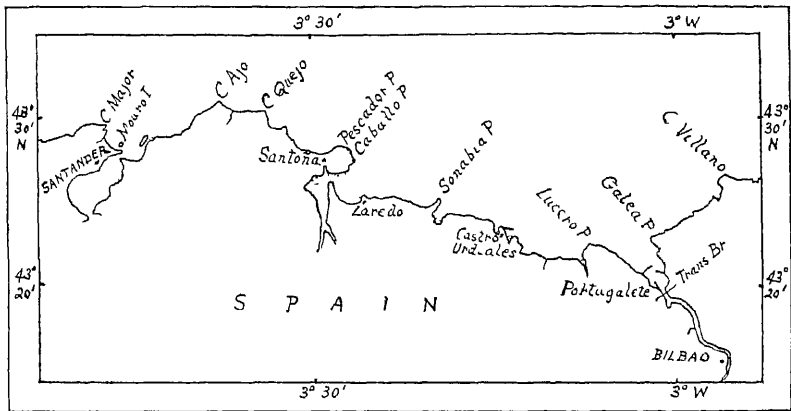
The yacht was kept on an unaltered course for two reasons. The navigator professed to be diffident of his calculations, based upon data both difficult and insufficient, and we were entirely content to keep the yacht well to windward of our port, for the wind showed

a tendency to draw ahead, and to grow in strength. Heavy clouds banked up in the S W. Our arrival in Spain looked likely to be signalized by an outburst of wind and a downpour of wet. At 4.30 p m. the increase of wind necessitated the stowage of topsail and jib. Land might well be in sight, but the loom of it was completely obscured by a dense combination of cloud and mist.

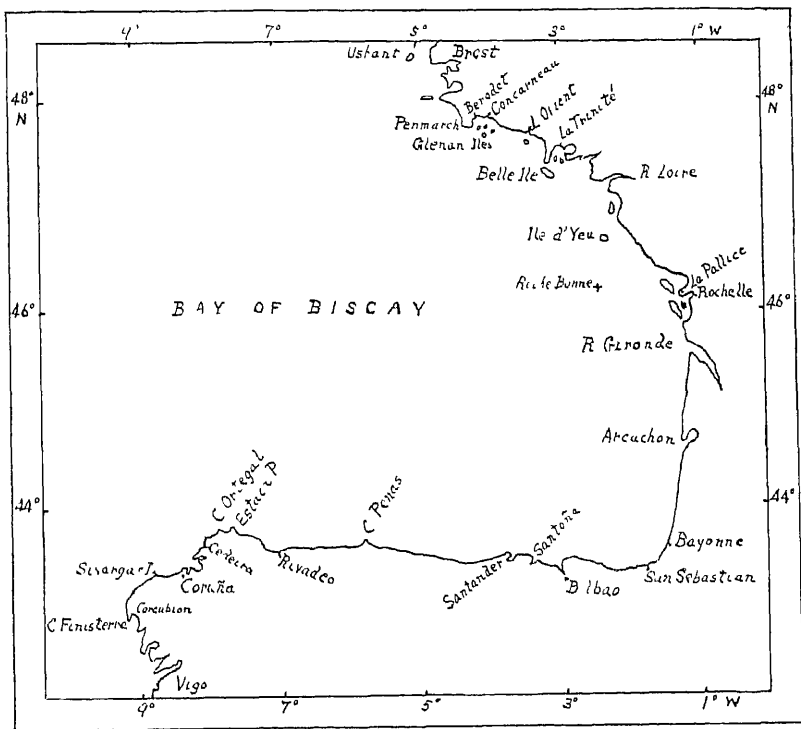
At 5.30 p m. the boy was at the tiller. The rest of us were below busy with the preparation of tea. Suddenly the boy's voice reached our ears. "Here's land—or the funniest looking cloud I ever saw!" He was told to keep his course—that land must be miles away yet. The water was on the point of boiling, the eggs must in a few moments be removed from the saucepan. At such a critical moment no one could be expected to rush on deck to investigate the boy's imaginary discoveries. A moment later he cried with manifest excitement: "Come and look—hurry up—it *is* land! We shall be ashore in two jiffies!"

We tumbled up. The boy was right. It was not only land, but land just under our bows. Ahead was a bay bordered by a low sandy shore. To port land high, gloomy, mysterious, loomed obscurely through a shroud of whirling mist. Spain undoubtedly, but what part of Spain? Any coast unmarked by prominent and distinctive features will easily puzzle a stranger even in clear weather, but the presence of mist renders the puzzle of finding out his exact landfall a hundred-fold more difficult to solve. We ran away eastward before the wind along the coast, and with binoculars and chart endeavoured to determine our position.

It did not take us long to conjecture that the high land, now broad abeam, must be the Pescador Point of Mount Santoña. The sailing directions stated that on the point there stood a conical white lighthouse.



Part of N Coast of Spain "Land of Mantilla and Fan"



General Chart Ushant to Vigo

Through the mist could be seen perched on the side of a cliff about a quarter of the way up the mountain side, a building which in no way fulfilled our conception of a possible lighthouse, and the most striking feature of which was, not the whiteness of its walls, but the ruddiness of its roof. Still, as we ran further E., the appearance of the coast, so far as the mist allowed a close survey, agreed with the outline of the chart and the description given in the directions. We rounded a corner and discovered another building. On Caballo Point there ought to be a lighthouse with a bluish conical tower. What caught the eye in the newly-discovered building was again a red roof, but above it there certainly was a structure like a candle-extinguisher of a bluish colour. We joyfully concluded that the high land was Mount Santoña. Round Fraile Point, already in sight not far ahead, lay Santoña Inlet—of which the directions spoke in warm, nay, for that sober manual, in almost enthusiastic terms—offering safety and comfort to weary seafarers.

The inlet lies roughly N.W. and S.E. The wind, W.S.W. at sea, was blowing straight out and the waters of a spring tide were beginning to pour smartly seaward. It was, therefore, quite questionable whether we should succeed in working the yacht into the haven of our desires. But we determined to make an attempt. On starboard tack close-hauled we sailed across the bay that fronts the entrance as far as we dared to go. Putting about, we fetched up on port tack under Fraile Point among a lot of open fishing boats at anchor. It was now raining heavily, and their crews were sheltering beneath the sails rigged up as tents. When in stays we shot close past one, we shouted "Santoña?" interrogatively, and pointed to the inlet. "Si, si!" came the prompt reply, "Santoña—si, si!"

Reaching across the bay again we sighted the bar-buoy—a pillar buoy, though the directions state it to be a buoy with a staff and ball. We were unable to stand over very far to the southward on account of the sands that cumber the entrance to the inlet. When we had come about, we found that the yacht would not quite lie up for the harbour. The ebb-tide was rushing out strongly and swept her to leeward faster than she went ahead. We were on the point of abandoning our design, and running under Fraile Point to bring up till the morning, when we were blessed with an unexpected stroke of good luck.

With terrific explosions and blinding flashes a thunder-storm burst almost immediately over our heads. The rain, heavy before, now came down in an unbroken sheet. The storm brought with it a shrieking S.W. squall. The crash of crockery from the cabin told us that the utensils of our neglected tea had hurriedly flown to leeward. But the breakage of plates, the smashing of eggs, the downfall of jam-pots troubled but little our cheery spirits, for, with the lee rail buried, the yacht raced against the tide over the bar into the inlet. The squall struck us with unexpected suddenness. It raged furiously for ten minutes, and then, with a final shriek, blew away completely, and left the yacht becalmed. By the fantastic wreathing of mist and rain we could detect its headlong flight amid the crannies and steep slopes of Mount Santoña. It passed away to sea with the fell intent of encompassing the destruction of any unwary vessel, but it lasted long enough to carry us into safety. At 7.30 p.m. we let go the anchor half way between Fort Carlos and Fort Isobella.

In voyaging from Kerdonis Point to off Santoña Inlet, 74 hours had been spent. The yacht had travelled at an average speed of a little more than 3 miles an hour.



When the many hours of calm and the persistent light winds are taken into consideration, this was really better travelling than appears at first sight. We were, undeniably, startled by the unexpected emergence from the mist of the shores of Spain at the very end of our bowsprit. But the matter admits of a simple explanation. The calculated position with regard to Bilbao was sufficiently correct. But the distance to the land on the bearing S. by W  $\frac{1}{2}$  W was much shorter than the space to be traversed had the course been changed and the yacht headed directly for Bilbao. Anyway, navigation puzzles seemed worthy of little consideration. We had reached Spain. So far the ill-omened bodings of croakers and their pessimistic presages of disaster had been proved to be utterly groundless, merely the dismal pronouncements of prophets of evil. We cleared up the mess on the cabin floor, habited our bodies in dry clothing, and sat down to a belated meal, a contented and jocund company.

### III

#### SANTOÑA    SANTANDER : PORTUGALETE

The Sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest,  
What hallows it upon this Christian shore?  
Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast  
Hark! heard you not the forest monarch's roar?  
Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore  
Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn.  
The throng'd arena shakes with shouts for more,  
Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,  
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor e'en affects to mourn

BYRON

*Monday, August 14*    A lovely morning, bright and clear, greeted our unhurried awakening from deep slumber. What a change from the rain and gloom of yesterday evening! The yacht lay snugly at anchor in a charming little river, the centre of a splendid panorama of green and purple hills. The sound of sharp orders and the measured tramp of men showed that the forts were still in use in spite of their unwarlike appearance. But seldom are poor mortals allowed perfect happiness. The sorry efforts of an unskilled bugler somewhere up the mountain side, practising calls upon an unmusical instrument, did much to mar the joyousness generated by a sweet sense of success and by the glorious weather.

The others turned out early to shave and to beautify their persons. The out-growth of all the little vanities natural to youth is one of the few advantages of approaching age, and I snoozed on contentedly, jumping up only when the shouts for breakfast became too clamorous to be longer ignored. Without a glance at the water

I leapt overboard. A rapid ebb tide held me forthwith in its grip. Though by frantic exertion I succeeded in laying hold of the ladder with one hand, so powerful was the current that my endeavour to pull myself forward canted, and partly unhooked the ladder, and seemed likely to break it adrift altogether. For a moment it looked as though the ladder and I would be hurried off to sea. But a yell brought up the boy. He hooked the ladder securely and enabled me to regain the deck. An excursion over the bar with only the support of an accommodation ladder was unanimously censured as a foolishly extravagant method of celebrating our arrival in Spain.

Shortly before 11 a.m., unable any longer to endure the diabolical perseverance of the maladroit bugler, though the tide was not yet slack, we weighed anchor, worked up the inlet, and moored the yacht off the town's landing-stage. The navigator and steward hurried ashore to interview the officials of the Sanidad and Custom House. They searched the town from end to end without finding a trace of either. At last they came across the office of the French Consul, who, as a Frenchman naturally would, received them politely, and smoothed out their difficulties. A clerk, who spoke some English, led them to the Captain of the Port. He was shown the Falmouth Bill of Health, and was told that Santoña was our first Spanish port of call. No mention was made of France, and no awkward questions were asked. He was hardly persuaded that a small craft had come from England solely in pursuit of enjoyment. However, in the end, he put his signature to the necessary papers, and sent the two on to be examined by the doctor. The doctor did not take the trouble even to cast an eye upon his visitors. He enquired through an attendant if all on board were well, and, being assured on this

point, he signed the farther papers that fell to his province. That done, we were entitled to enjoy the unfettered freedom of the port. The foreign trade of Santoña is so small that the officials seemed a little flustered by the *Winnie's* arrival, and uncertain of the treatment with which she ought to be received.

We spent ashore an amusing afternoon. Santoña in itself is not a very interesting town, and for its complete exploration only a short time was required. It is pleasantly situated on a narrow peninsula that barely fails to be an island, for the head of the inlet is separated from the open sea only by a low-lying stretch of sand. The nearest railway station is four or five miles away. But for its isolation Santoña might easily rival in position and attraction San Sebastian and the other fashionable watering-places of the Spanish coasts. Difficult of access as it is by land, members of the nobility have country houses on its outskirts. One incongruity greatly amused the untravelled members of the party—the sight of powerful motor-cars of the latest pattern held up by deliberate oxen dragging lumbering carts of a model that must have been old when Noah filled the ark with its comprehensive menagerie.

Wearied with sight-seeing we seated ourselves in front of a café to rest our legs and to assuage our thirst. The navigator, with the help of a phrase-book, the landlady, her staff, three children, a couple of servants, and a bar-loafer, made enquiries about the purchase of provisions. Guided by a little damsel, he obtained a basketful of eggs. With the same assistance he secured bread and other immediate necessities. Loaded with our purchases we started to return to the yacht. The basket of eggs, my share of the burden, proved unexpectedly weighty. Looking down I found a small boy from the café clinging to it with steadfast resolution.

Surrounded by a little crowd of amused spectators we tried to explain that the basket would be restored. The boy declared volubly that the eggs might be ours, but the basket was his mother's, and that only at the cost of his life would he allow it to be removed by alien hands. Not a word of what he said was understood, but that was evidently the purport of his speech. A return was made to the café. There they either did not understand that we desired but to borrow the basket, or were unwilling to trust to our honesty. The difficulty was solved by the purchase of the basket for half a peseta.

In the evening we all went ashore to dine. With laughter on both sides, the basket was restored and the money returned. From a man who spoke a little English we were astonished to learn that the yacht was supposed to be on a voyage round the world. Concerning our first Spanish dinner we agreed that, while most of it was excellent, certain dishes were untempting. As was perhaps to be expected in a place where the inhabitants depended for their livelihood upon the capture of fish, the backbone of the feast consisted of dried cod imported from Newfoundland. A liking for dried fish is a taste not readily acquired.

To spare our rapidly diminishing stock of beer each man, under the cover of kindly night, struggled on board with as many bottles of wine as he was able to carry. The steward wrote to his friends at Bilbao to warn them of our speedy arrival. Previous notification was deemed expedient of the pleasure in store, if only to allow time for the judicious choice of a suitable calf to be slaughtered in our honour.

*Tuesday, August 15.* Having exhausted the attractions of Santoña we decided to turn our attention to the mainland. A small steam-boat carried us some three miles up an arm of the inlet to Treto, a hamlet

which, with its little railway station, gives to the inhabitants of Santoña their only means of escape from the strictest seclusion. On board the boat were three British workmen who had been employed for many months at Santoña on the drainage and electric lighting of a huge new prison, and were now starting upon their return journey to England. They were obviously delighted to hear their native tongue again, and still more delighted to receive each a pipeful of English tobacco. "There are two kinds of tobacco in Spain," they grumbled, "and both bad!" They liked Spain and the Spanish, but did not take kindly to the food, and utterly despised the wine. They longed to get their teeth into a good meat pudding and to quench their thirst with a pint mug of honest English beer! They averred that the lot of the prisoners—murderers and criminals of the worst type—was far superior to that of the working man who avoided the clutch of the law. The prisoners were well fed and received many privileges; the workmen toiled long hours for miserable pay and were always on the verge of starvation. We left them at the station and set out for Laredo.

From Treto one has a splendid view of Mount Santoña. Murray likens it to Gibraltar with Laredo as its Algeciras. The towering mountain, connected with the mainland by a low isthmus barely raised above the level of the sea, may possibly bear some resemblance to Gibraltar and its surroundings. The inlet is easy to enter, has 10 feet over the bar at low water, and affords a safe and uncrowded anchorage.

A hot walk along a good road, bordered by fields of Indian corn, brought us to Laredo. The town has an ancient wall and other antiquities to attract the attention of tourists, but, as at Santoña, fishing is the only industry of which any signs are conspicuous. Here we

were able to examine ashore dozens of the boats we had seen at sea carrying a big lug aft and a baby one forward. They seemed all to be exactly the same size—36 feet long with a beam of 6ft. 6in. They rowed seven oars aside and were carvel-built. A clinker-built boat is a rare sight in Spanish waters. At Laredo we had our first taste of a dish—squid served with some kind of black sauce—that alone is worth a visit to Spain.

On our return, late in the afternoon, we were unable from the steam-boat to discover the dinghy, about the safety of which during our absence we had been somewhat concerned. So far we had gained no experience of the treatment likely to be given by Spanish boys to the unguarded boats of visiting strangers. Our worst fears seemed to be realized. We hastened ashore to investigate. The dinghy was gone! A hurried glance assured us that she was nowhere in sight on the water. The boy's sharp eye detected her snugly ensconced, bottom upward, within the shelter of a big boat not far from the spot where she had been left lying. The oars were safely tucked beneath her thwarts. A small crowd of women and boys endeavoured to explain why she had been shifted. Their words were incomprehensible, but explanation was scarcely required. The boat had been badly used, but was not materially damaged. All the urchins of the place had evidently had their will of her till her rescue from their hands by some friend unknown. "Bless their sweet eyes!" I muttered in the tone and temper of the coasting skipper who had got religion and had bound himself by a vow to forego bad language.

*Wednesday, August 16.* We ran westward to Santander along a rocky and jagged coast, 200 to 300 feet high. After Mount Santoña, one of whose peaks attains a height of more than 1,300 feet, the coast seemed to

be comparatively tame and insignificant. Though an early start was made, Cape Ajo, the E. end of Santander Bay, owing to lack of wind, was not passed till 1 p.m. The entrance to the port is faced by Mouro Island, a rugged mass of some height capped by a lighthouse. The passage generally used lies to the westward of the island, but we took the E. passage and found no difficulty in entering. To one approaching from the E. the most prominent object is a big new building standing high up immediately behind the island. Its appearance and position seemed to betoken an hotel.

A little bewilderment about where to bring up was removed by the sight of two 15-metre yachts lying to anchor in front of the town. As either of them might be the King's yacht, we dipped our ensign as we passed. The first took no notice; the second promptly acknowledged the salute. Santander along the river front makes a brave show with its lofty, handsome buildings. There is an enclosed harbour where yachts lie to their own anchors with a stern-rope to the shore. We were unaware of its existence in time, and, when once the anchor was down, were disinclined to move. The *Winnie* was moored at 4.30 p.m. in a comfortable berth astern of the 15-metre yachts.

Hardly was the canvas stowed when a boat from the Sanidad paid us a visit. At the moment I was busy with the stove in the fo'c'sle, and was content to leave to the others the transaction of business. But I was called forth to undergo the doctor's inspection. The sight of my bronzed and hard-featured countenance, shining with the perspiration produced by the heat of the fo'c'sle and my struggles with an obstinate stove, entirely removed all doubt about the state of my health, and stirred up the doctor and his boatman to unseemly laughter. They took away our papers with the in-



junction that they should be called for not later than 6 p.m.

As no convenient place in which to leave the dinghy, whilst we wandered about ashore, could be discovered near the yacht, we picked out the biggest looking ruffian of a group of boatmen lounging about some landing-stairs, and entrusted the boat to his custody. With some difficulty the Sanidad was found—it was under our noses all the time—and our papers recovered. “Anything to pay?” we asked of the understrapper who handed them over and who professed to speak English. “No, no!” was the indignant reply. But a little later in the street I was startled by a whisper from behind: “Mister—*rapina*—for coffee!” Looking round hastily I found at my elbow the man who shortly before had deprecated the mention of payment, now freed from the supervision of his superiors, evidently begging for a tip. “You want a *pourboire*?” “Si, si, señor, for coffee to drink!” A trifle ridded us of his solicitation.

We had a very good but somewhat expensive table d’hôte dinner at the Hotel de Europa. The ruffian on our return to the boat accepted with murmured thanks our proffered reward. We were secretly relieved that he did not bluster and refuse to hand over his trust till we had satisfied exorbitant demands. How deceptive often are appearances! Byron’s corsair—

He was the mildest mannered man  
That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat\*—

looked, we may suppose, like Uriah Heap in his ’umblest mood, whilst the seemingly reckless desperadoes of Santander’s quays are reasonably honest men, and addicted to no worse piracy than that practised by longshoremen all the world over.

\* *Don Juan*, III. 41.

*Thursday, August 17.* A beautiful day with quite a strong S.E. wind. The crew spent the morning ashore. In the afternoon the skipper of the 15-metre yacht, astern of which we were lying, came alongside for a chat. The yacht, the *Tuiga*, belonged to the Duke of Medinacelli. The skipper was an Englishman and commanded an English crew. He pressed us to call at the Yacht Club and introduce ourselves to the members with the certainty of a warm welcome. To do this was beyond our courage. Through his good offices the steward was able to supplement a failing store of whisky. The *Tuiga* had just returned from the international racing at Cowes, where she had won many prizes.

All went ashore in the evening. Seated at the open window of a café we studied the manners of the natives. Between the houses and the river lies a magnificent parade. The promenading of this appears to be the sole amusement of Santander's inhabitants. The girls and young men walk up and down in separate groups.

Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,  
Bid man be valiant ere he merit such :  
Her glance, how wildly beautiful : how much  
Hath Phœbus woo'd in vain to spoil her cheek,  
Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch !  
Who round the North for paler dames would seek ?

How poor their forms appear ! how languid, wan, and weak ! \*

Much may be pardoned to poetic license, but the above lines seem to be an instance of poetic license carried to a mad extreme. Byron had in his mind, of course, the beauties of the South, who may possibly deserve a tithe of his fervid enthusiasm. At Santander we saw many nice-looking, trim-built lassies, but neither there, nor anywhere else in Spain, did we notice a girl of surpassing beauty.

\* *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, I. 58

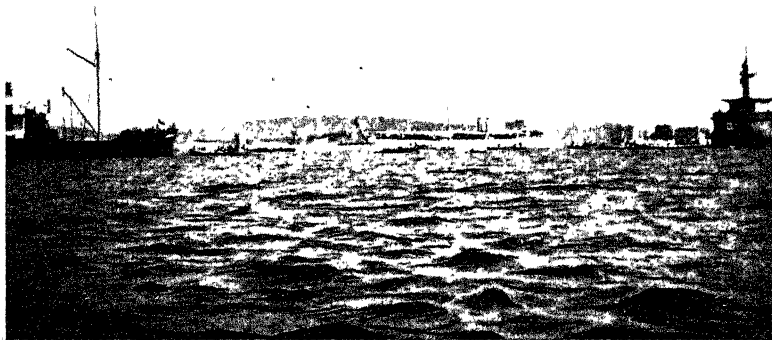
*Friday, August 18.* With a nice N.E. breeze we started at the top of the tide for Bilbao and quickly worked out of the river. Then came a day of the bitterest vexation. When there was any wind, it blew from E., dead in our teeth, but, for the most part, there was no wind at all. At 6 p.m. at least three distinct thunderstorms were raging in our neighbourhood with noisy violence. Fitful breezes blew up for a few moments, but by the time our canvas was trimmed they were gone again. At 7.40 p.m., after an interval of absolute calm, we were suddenly struck by a heavy squall from N.W. which caused us to drop hastily the peak of the mainsail. This hurried us in the direction of Santoña, where, in disgust, we determined to spend the night. Thanks to vivid lightning we had no difficulty in picking up the buoys and beating into the river. We brought up at 9.30 p.m. in almost a calm. Over our grog a heated discussion arose as to whether the squall that had struck us were a *galerna* or not. Some maintained stoutly that it was only the ordinary squall that might be met with anywhere in the wake of a thunderstorm, but the rest insisted that it was a *galerna*, and probably they were right.

Now of a *galerna* one may say, adapting the words of Bottom: "There is no more fearful wildfowl than your galerna living." Here is a quotation from the sailing directions: "The galernas are those sudden changes of wind from the S. to the N.W. which blow strong and are common on the coast. It is seldom after a day of excessive heat that a galerna does not blow in the evening, the greatest strength of which will last from ten minutes to an hour. Sometimes the galerna comes on with the strength of a hurricane without any warning. Many of the wrecks on the coast, in summer, are occasioned by the sudden changes of

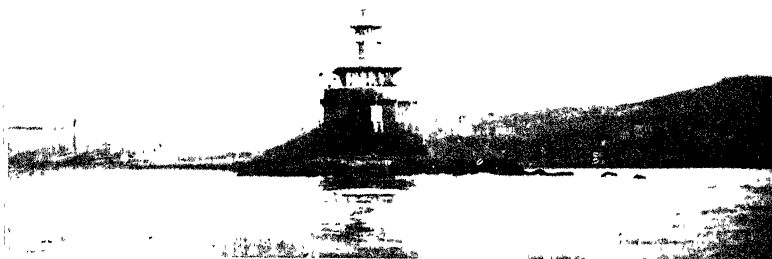
wind which overtake vessels with all sails set in a calm." Later we heard harrowing tales of the destructive might of a *galerna*, but we were fortunate enough never to experience another.

*Saturday, August 19.* The whole of the day was spent in slipping quietly with a light N. wind from Santoña to Bilbao. Two of us were badly off-colour owing to the rottenness of our breakfast eggs. Either Spanish fowls lay them rotten, or a Santander grocer had palmed off on unsuspecting strangers what he would not have dared to sell to a fellow townsman. One of the batch cooking for breakfast burst in the saucepan, nearly stank us out of the cabin, and quite upset the steward. The egg that fell to my lot was, to all appearances, perfectly fresh, but, cooked with bad ones, it had acquired a rotten flavour. One mouthful made me uncomfortable for the rest of the day. Reciprocal sympathy failed to relieve the *malaise* of either the steward or myself. Till late in the afternoon solid food was regarded with loathing, and nips of every liquid on board only added to our woe.

On leaving Santoña Inlet we passed a fine mass of lofty hills. Further E. the land became lower. In time we saw, set in a bay, the quaint old castellated fortress of Castro Urdiales, which, perched on a rocky eminence, forms a most noticeable landmark on this portion of the coast. At 5 p.m. the yacht crawled past Cape Lucero, a high green hill, and had open ahead the expanse of Bilbao Bay, bounded on its E. shore by the white cliffs that end in Galea point. At 7 p.m., urged on by a sweep, she passed between the massive piers. In the gathering darkness we saw, not far away, a small fleet of yachts lying off Portugalete. Some of the steward's friends appeared in a boat, and pointed out a good berth a little way above and well inside the big buoy



Entrance to Bilbao.



West Pier, Bilbao.

of the moorings which are reserved for the use of the King's yacht. The moment the anchor was down, the Sanidad people were alongside. The steward was taken off to dine, and to spend the night with his friends. The rest of us sat down to a dinner-tea, and declared, with brazen untruthfulness, that nothing would tempt us to exchange our simple meal for the luxurious banquet which we pictured the steward enjoying ashore.

We had entered this harbour in some trepidation. The sailing directions seemed to intimate that it bristled with difficulties, both natural and artificial, and that pilotage was compulsory for vessels of every class. Much of what they say applies, no doubt, to the Bilbao river proper, into which we did not enter. A pilot-boat bore down and had a look at the yacht, but sheered off without even a hail. The breakwaters, spoken of in the directions as unfinished, are now fully completed. In a gale of wind the entrance may be difficult, but in ordinary weather it is quite easy. And the man must be hard to please who is not satisfied with the anchorage off Portugalete, just outside the river Nervion, whereon, seven or eight miles up, stands the busy city of Bilbao. Many Englishmen with business offices in Bilbao have their private residences at Portugalete.

*Sunday, August 20.* Hardly was the *Winnie* cleaned up and decked with club burgee and blue ensign, when Mr. J. Browne, the English manager of a mining company, boarded us from a motor-launch. He introduced himself, enquired whence we had come, how we found ourselves at Portugalete, and carried us off to the Sporting Club. The clubhouse was a big house-boat fitted out with tasteful magnificence, and thronged at the moment with a crowd of members. Then began for the *Winnie's* crew the time of their lives. Greater hospitality could not have been displayed. Members

of the club, whatever their nationality, vied with each other in making our stay a pleasure to look back upon. The English were unfeignedly glad to welcome their fellow countrymen, and the Spaniards were greatly interested in the yacht and her crew. Our coming was regarded as a feat of great daring, and we were so often complimented on our pluck that we three elders, who thought we had long forgotten how to blush, knowing how little laudatory remarks were deserved, frequently experienced an unwonted glow beneath the tan and sunburn of our weather-beaten cheeks.

After an early lunch we were hurried in a tightly packed train to Bilbao to see the first of the annual bull-fights for which the place is famous. Not one of us expected to enjoy the spectacle, but we felt that we ought not to neglect the opportunity of seeing a sight which we might never have the chance of seeing again.

Guided by one of our new friends we squeezed into our places in the bull-ring just late enough to miss the parade of all the performers in the forthcoming show, which is said to give a truthful picture of the magnificence found in bygone ages when barbarism was garbed in gorgeous habiliments. The first bull was already in the arena, gradually being irritated to frenzy by the men who flapped flags in its face, and avoided its wild rushes with marvellous agility. In *Childe Harold*\* Byron gives quite an accurate description of a bull-fight. In one particular only is his description inapplicable to the action of the pageant performed in the amphitheatre at Bilbao. He writes :

On gallant steeds  
With milk-white crest, gold spurs, and light-pois'd lance,  
Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,  
And lowly bending, to the lists advance.

\* Canto I., 68-78.

At Bilbao the horses were the most wretched crocks imaginable. Their riders, dressed in mediaeval costume and heavily padded about the legs, were armed only with a pole tipped with an iron spike. All the horses had their off-eyes bandaged. An attendant placed one in a position to be a temptation to the excited bull. Unable to see its approaching foe, the horse made not the slightest motion to escape. The bull charged and jabbed his horns into the poor beast's belly. Meantime his rider, standing in his stirrups, drove his ineffective weapon into the shoulder of the bull. In the end horse and man were overthrown. The horse kicked about in agony, the dismounted rider was put upon his legs to walk away, while the men with the flags distracted the bull's attention to another helpless horse. Having tasted the joy of slaughter, he made short work of as many more as were necessary. No bull kills less than three horses, many a one required six before it was sufficiently exhausted. For this eviscerating of helpless horses is not merely a piece of senseless brutality to gratify the spectators' lust for the sight of blood, but a necessity to weaken the bull to allow the matador to deal him his death-blow. Necessary or not, it is a most disgusting sight.

Finally, at the sound of a trumpet, the matador advances into the ring. The last act begins, and to one uninitiated in the niceties of bull-fighting it is likely to prove a slow and tedious act. Again and again the bull charges and the matador steps nimbly aside. Something is not quite to his liking. But, at last, the bull lowers his head to charge, the matador darts forward and drives his sword in right up to the hilt just over the beast's right shoulder. With consummate skill he evades its rush. The bull totters, sinks to his knees and dies.



But not always is this the ending. The first bull this day had a moment of triumph. The matador drove his sword in, but not quite home. The bull caught him, tossed him, and several times used a horn upon the helpless body, with a wicked side-jerk of his head. It was a moment of mad excitement. The crowd, with a single impulse, rose and yelled. High above all the uproar a woman's wild shriek rang out despairingly. The bull was tempted away, and the matador carried off apparently dead. Another stepped forth immediately, but his services were not required. The first man's sword had done its work. After several painful moments the bull collapsed.

Before condemning a people's national amusement, one ought to consider the state of civilization to which the people has attained. Bull-baiting, suppressed by the Puritans, not, we are given to understand, in consideration of the suffering of the bull, but through a determination to crush the pleasure of the lower orders, would hardly nowadays, even were it permissible, attract a crowd of eager spectators; nor can we imagine that the gladiatorial combats, established by the Roman emperors to tranquillize a discontented populace, would find any favour in the eyes of the inhabitants of modern Rome. Spain, educationally and politically, is one of the most backward countries on the Continent, and, while it has all the virtues of a primitive state, it has also the defects to be expected from an immature civilization. The day will probably dawn when the characteristic cruelty to animals will disappear, and bull-fights will become things of the inglorious past.

We sat out the whole performance and saw six bulls killed. The building held 12,500 spectators, and not a seat was empty. The sea of faces was a wonderful

sight. Spectators had come from every part of Spain. Of the wealthier class the same people, in many instances, would be present every afternoon of the four days' fighting. For months beforehand the poorer folk had been saving up their coppers to purchase a ticket. In spite of outraged feelings we were compelled at times to laugh with unrestrained heartiness. When, as repeatedly happened, a bull was applauded, a man, presumably the breeder of the bulls, a ludicrously corpulent individual, hoisted himself painfully to his feet and, hand on heart, gravely bowed to the cheering multitude. His duty happily done, he sank back slowly to his seat and mopped a heated brow, while his whole mountain of flesh quivered with sternly repressed emotion. A neat kill by a matador roused such enthusiasm that, passing round to acknowledge the plaudits of the excited throng, he was deluged with cigars, cigarettes and hats. A following attendant threw back the hats but pocketed the other offerings.

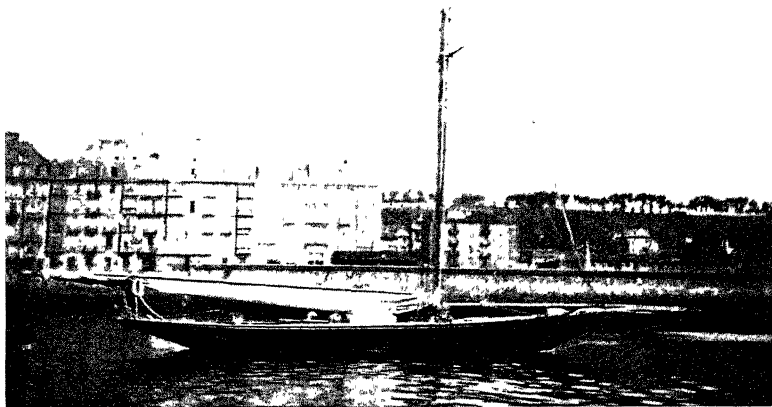
*Monday, August 21.* The morning was spent in laying in supplies and in recovering our papers. These were obtained without the bestowal of a *douceur*, a thing which, we were told, was unprecedented in the annals of Portugalete. The venality of Spanish officials seems to be notorious, but nowhere was any unrighteous demand made upon our purses.

*Tuesday, August 22.* This morning any unconscious self-satisfaction received a nasty shock. We met an elderly English lady who, in place of flattering remarks on our skill and courage, preached to us, in good set terms, a sermon on the folly, nay, wickedness, of risking our lives in a small ship so far from our homes. She wished us a safe return, and expressed a hope that we should never again be guilty of so foolhardy an adventure. This unexpected cold douche did us, no doubt, a world

of good ; it froze up any embryonic tendency to self-conceit.

The greater part of the day was spent in the mountains, where we lunched with Mr. Browne at his mining headquarters. A private railway conveyed us through a country which was the scene of desperate fighting in the Carlist rising. After a magnificent banquet our host made some of his men give an exhibition game of *pelota*. The game resembled very strenuous bat-fives. The others were tempted to try their hands ; but repletion, and a desire to finish the bowl of punch with which the feast was crowned, brought their efforts to an untimely conclusion.

On our return we went to the Sporting Club to bid our numerous friends a final farewell, for we intended to go to sea with the land breeze, which rarely fails to arise in the small hours of the morning. With difficulty we resisted a pressing request to stay for the regatta on the following Saturday. The King's yacht would be racing and the King was to be present himself. Surely we could stay and allow the King to see the yacht and her crew ! But we were unable to afford the time and were obliged to be obdurate to all persuasion. At last, with many promises to return another year, we managed to tear ourselves away from many detaining hands. We reached the yacht quite overwhelmed by the kindness we had met with from everyone at Portugalete, and thoroughly sorry that the ruthless flight of time forced us to bid an unwilling farewell to the hospitable shores of Spain.



Quay, Santander.



Bridge at Portugalete.

## IV

LA PALLICE : LA TRINITÉ : LORIENT : CONCARNEAU :  
CAMARET : FALMOUTH

Farewell and adieu to you, fine Spanish ladies,  
Farewell and adieu to you, ladies of Spain ;  
For we have received orders  
For to sail to old England,  
And perhaps we shall never more see you again.

ANONYMOUS.

*Wednesday, August 23.* Soon after midnight we slipped out between the breakwaters with a light S. draught bound for La Pallice, the port of La Rochelle, distant 200 miles. The time was now too short to admit of our intended visits to San Sebastian and Passages. Lower canvas alone was set, for there was much lightning all round and the sky, heavy with banks of cloud, wore a sinister look. The yacht's head was put N.E. by N., half a point northward of the direct course. At 5 a.m. the land breeze ceased, but almost immediately there came a strong W.N.W. wind which never failed all day, though it varied a little, from time to time, in weight and direction. The yacht travelled fast. In the early morning we had a splendid view of the Spanish coast with its background of mountains towering high, wild, broken, rugged and sharply defined in the clear atmosphere. It was late in the day before the blue heights faded away in the dim distance.

After our recent luxurious life all, except the navigator, found the yacht's quick motion wondrously disturbing.

He took his meals like a man, while the rest of us picked at our food daintily with little show of appetite. At 6 p.m., when the log registered 82 miles, there was considerable venom in the wind, and a big sea was beginning to roll in from the ocean. Anticipating from appearances a dirty night, we hove to for an hour to eat a square meal. Thereafter we took in a reef. A short trial convinced us that canvas was insufficiently reduced. Just before dark we tied down the second reef and took off the jib. We were pleased to find that, under double-reefed mainsail, mizen and staysail, the *Winnie* was making good weather of a heavy beam sea. We had gained, so far, no experience of her powers in a breeze : her behaviour soon removed all the anxiety we may have felt at being caught in bad weather in the open bay.

*Thursday, August 24.* We were unable to read the log at midnight as the under-side of the glass over the face of the dial was encrusted with salt. The sea had grown still bigger. From time to time the yacht dipped her nose deeply, and an occasional lump of water slopped over into the cockpit, but our progress was in every respect satisfactory and comfortable. At 3 a.m. there was less wind. As she seemed to have a lot of water on board, the yacht was hove to, and the unwanted cargo pumped back to the sea. At 6 a.m. the log registered 114 miles, but the log-line was much tangled up, and we doubted if the log had been registering correctly for hours. The line had either fouled while the yacht was laid-to to be pumped, or had picked up a piece of weed during the hours of darkness. The evil threat of the night was largely discounted by the fair promise of the early morning. The wind lulled and the sea subsided. Our expectations of bad weather were pleasantly falsified, and we were soon rejoicing in a beautiful day. The wind settled down into a steady W. breeze. The yacht's head was put

N.E., for the navigator discovered from his morning's observation that, whatever our latitude, we were too far to the westward.

By 10.30 a.m. the yacht was under all sail. The steward thought that the unhopèd for return of fine weather and smooth water ought to be regarded as an "occasion." Some time ago we had ended, as we supposed, all our supply of beer. But later the steward, rummaging about in the recesses of the lockers, found six more full bottles. These were unanimously reserved for special occasions. The lovely day deserved toasting, and we thought—or three of us did—that a draught of beer would entirely remove all traces of the internal discomfort from which we had suffered since our departure from Spain. As, happily, proved to be the case. At noon the log registered 143 miles. A good meridian altitude showed that the yacht was many miles ahead of the log. We ran on N.E., thinking that this course would bring us nicely to windward of Ile d'Oléron. Between this island and the Ile de Ré is situated the Pertuis d'Antioche, up which lies the road to La Pallice.

Soon after 4 p.m., though we knew the coast to be low, we began to wonder at the obstinate refusal of land to disclose itself. A certain cloudiness seemed to indicate its situation, but it remained beyond our ken, and we hesitated to close with it till we were sure of our position. But at 6 p.m., when we had run our distance, we put the yacht's head due E., determined to hold on till we found something to clear up our uncertainty. Almost immediately we sighted land. A little later a white light flashed out right ahead. This was found to be the Chassiron light on the N.W. end of Ile d'Oléron.

At 8 p.m. we were in the entrance of the Pertuis d'Antioche with a strong tide against us, a nasty

swabble sufficient to keep our canvas shaking, and only a light S.W. wind to drive the yacht ahead. It is a somewhat troublesome piece of water for a stranger to venture in the dark. On the other hand, it is beautifully lighted. By attending carefully to the leading lights we went in safely, and, after a most interesting little bit of navigation, we brought up in rather deep water at 11.30 p.m. in the Rade des Basques. While the chain was running away gaily, I failed, in the dark, to find the brake with my foot. Fathom after fathom rattled out. In desperation, at last, I dropped a pawl. That acted effectually, and just in time. There was little spare chain left when its flight was thus abruptly checked.

*Friday, August 25.* A bright morning showed us a wide expanse of water dotted with low islands. When a little wind arose at 11 a.m. we weighed anchor, and were soon brought up in the far end of La Pallice, an enclosed harbour where vessels swing to their own anchors. We half expected some difficulty with our papers as we had left Spain without having them endorsed with a French Consul's *visa*. But no trouble occurred. Late in the afternoon we went by steam-tram to La Rochelle, three miles distant, and had dinner at the Hôtel de Commerce. Afterwards we drank coffee, seated outside beneath the shelter of an awning, intending to while away an hour in scanning the passers-by. But passers-by were remarkably rare. By 8.30 p.m. the town was like a city of the dead, and we were obliged to walk back most of the way to the yacht, for the tramcars, like the townsfolk, had withdrawn from the streets.

Curses, like chickens, come home to roost. Indiscreet remarks are often endowed with the same homing qualities. At Santoña, utterly helpless through



ignorance of Spanish, I was rash enough to declare that better acquaintance with its language, and thereby easier communication with its inhabitants, rendered France, compared with Spain, almost a second fatherland. The crew, unfortunately, remembered my injudicious statement, and now bade me show my mastery of French by acting as general interpreter. The position was embarrassing. 'Only with difficulty was it possible to prove that my ignorance of French was materially less than my ignorance of Spanish. My linguistic atrocities must have strained almost to breaking point the proverbial politeness of many a plump *boutiquière*.

*Saturday, August 26.* Whilst I remained on board to give the yacht a thorough cleansing, the rest betook themselves again to La Rochelle. They inspected the harbour, which they described on their return as the snuggest of nooks, with a narrow entrance defended on either hand by ancient and picturesque towers, but an unsuitable haven for yachts because it dries out at low water and is always packed with fishing boats to its utmost capacity. Their happiest moments were spent over *déjeuner* at an hotel. To the navigator was entrusted the duty of paying the bill. In his change he received a ten-franc piece disfigured by a hole. Finding later that no shop would accept it, they returned in a body to the hotel, and demanded another coin in exchange. At first the landlord refused absolutely to entertain the suggestion, but afterwards, either smitten in his conscience—the navigator disclaimed all belief in his possession of such a thing—or frightened by the boy's truculent aspect—he is big and burly, and was wearing a slouch hat at a ferocious angle—he listened to reason and made the demanded exchange.

*Sunday, August 27.* At 6.20 a.m., with a light N.E. wind, the yacht slipped out between the piers. We

hoped to sail, without breaking our passage, to Belle Ile, more than 100 miles ahead. Outside we found the wind S.E. and light. We passed somewhat slowly through the Pertuis Breton along the shores of the Ile de Ré. The Pertuis Breton and the Pertuis d'Antioche together form a fine stretch of inland sea which bears a faint resemblance to Spithead and the Solent. It struck us as surprising that not a yacht was visible throughout its whole length.

At noon, before we had quite reached the open sea, the tide came against us and the wind died away. Off the lighthouse on Baleines point, the N.W. corner of Ile de Ré, we sweltered all the afternoon in a dead calm beneath the rays of a blazing sun. At lunch we solemnly finished the last of the beer. The steward waxed eloquent. "You may talk of your red wine," he said, "you may talk of your white wine, but what is either compared with this?" He gulped down his share of the precious fluid at a draught. The sigh he heaved, as he surveyed his empty glass, betrayed suppressed emotion and sorrowful resignation.

At 6 p.m. a faint N.N.E. air brought relief to our perspiring bodies, and enabled us to keep the yacht's head N.W. by N. on the course for Ile d'Yeu. It was a beautiful evening. The sun sank clear below the horizon leaving a brilliant afterglow. The sea was absolutely smooth save for a long slow roll from N.W. The wind gradually grew stronger. At 9 p.m. we were nearly abreast of the brilliantly lighted port of Sables d'Olonne.

*Monday, August 28.* At 3 a.m., with a fine N.E. breeze, we were passing close along the outer coast of Ile d'Yeu. This island is well lighted. At the S.E. end is a lighthouse showing a red light; on a reef at the N.W. end is a beacon tower having a fixed white

light with a green sector ; half-way between the two stands the Petite Foule lighthouse, which supports a very powerful flashing electric light. It is a convenient sign-post for vessels bound either to the Loire or the Gironde. Clear of the island we altered our course to N.N.W. Till daylight the breeze held up. A beautiful dawn gradually lighted the eastern sky.

Now like a wild rose in the field of heaven  
Slipt forth the slender fingers of the Dawn,  
And drew the great grey Eastern curtains back  
From the ivory saffroned couch. Rosily slid  
One shining foot and one warm rounded knee  
From silken coverlets of the tossed back clouds.

ALFRED NOYES.

The sun rose from the sea as clearly as it had sunk into it the night before. From 5 a.m. to 1 p.m. we had a dead calm with terrific heat. At last our endurance was rewarded by a strong breeze W. by S. By 4 p.m. we had the long flat lump of Belle Ile in sight, and hoped to save daylight into Le Palais roads. But, of course, our hopes were vain. Expectations of saving daylight into harbours are seldom realized. At 5.30 p.m. began another spell of calm with a wet and stormy looking sky to the West. After an hour a sprinkle of rain brought back the wind from the same quarter. It carried us slowly in the growing darkness over an adverse tide round the buoy off Kerdonis point. Then for hours no wind again. At 11 p.m. heavy rain and a smart N.N.W. wind came together. We were too thankful for any wind at all to be critical about its direction, and with renewed cheerfulness we proceeded to beat up to an anchorage.

*Tuesday, August 29.* The night was very dark, and we had some difficulty in finding a berth. But, soon after midnight, we let the anchor go in fair shelter near a fishing smack. Before the canvas was stowed we found

the yacht showing a malicious desire to charge her neighbour. Riding a weather-tide, both were careering about capriciously. Under staysail the yacht was run some distance away and brought up again. But the boats seemed bewitched. This time the smack bore down upon the yacht. The boy slipped out to the end of the bowsprit, and with active feet warded off the onset of the froward smack.

A man lying asleep on her fore deck suddenly jumped up, uttered a howl of alarm, and, without a word, darted aft and plunged down below. To be rudely roused from a deep sleep by the glare of our sidelights pouring into his eyes, and to feel the boy's heavy feet stamping about in close proximity to his ears might well be enough to startle any man out of his customary self-possession, but in the dim light cast by a lantern slung to the smack's fore-stay he looked as if he took the boy to be the Devil in unusual guise come to carry off to his doom a panic-stricken sinner. The anchor was weighed once more, and, at the third attempt, we managed to find a clear berth. We turned in and had an undisturbed sleep.

After a leisurely breakfast we started for La Trinité on the Crac'h river. We drifted through the Teignouse passage into Quiberon bay, and found no difficulty in entering the river, when we reached it, by keeping on the leading lights as directed. Owing to light wind the short trip took a long time. We found a comfortable anchorage off the little town. Wholesome mudbanks on either hand reminded us of our own east-coast rivers, and the illusion of home was intensified by the presence of a fleet of smart yachts lying at moorings.

Quiberon bay offers a fine cruising ground with its easy tides, sheltered anchorages, and convenient harbours. Here, as at La Rochelle, the coast and country round are low and flat—very different from the dark,

precipitous shores of Spain with their thunderstorms and fierce squalls. In the N.E. corner of Quiberon bay lies the entrance to the Morbihan, a stretch of water occupied by numerous islands and shoals between which the tide rushes with surprising velocity. We had neither time nor inclination to entangle ourselves in its intricacies.

*Wednesday, August 30.* The morning was spent in filling the water-tank. There is a convenient tap on the quay from which water may be drawn without the payment of any charge. A French gentleman, struck by the *Winnie's* appearance, begged to be allowed to look over her. He was a portly man and clumsy withal. The trip in the pram to and from the yacht caused me considerable anxiety. It had its moments of thrills, but was happily accomplished without any accident. My visitor's English was on a par with my French. It was a mercy that the crew were still engaged in watering the ship, for, had they heard the outrages unfeelingly wrought on two innocent languages, they would have succumbed to unseemly mirth or violent hysterics. The gentleman insisted that the *Winnie* was on the lines of a "Dungeness Pilot Boat"—a type of vessel quite outside the range of my knowledge.

After *déjeuner* at the Hôtel de Bretagne we went off by train to Carnac. The rows of big stones are, naturally, of interest to antiquarians, but I soon wearied of the sight of their monotonous regularity. We were pestered by pertinacious girls, who pressed upon us bunches of heather, and expected in return the bestowal of coppers. I happened to be destitute of coins of any kind—my last had gone in payment for lunch. It was only by turning inside out every pocket in my garments that my tormentors were finally convinced that I had really no money to give away. They were an unkempt and ill-washed

crew. Mr. Cowper in his "Sailing Tours," Vol. III., quotes two explanations of the origin of these Carnac Stones. Neither is perhaps very convincing. The first is that they were erected by Roman legionaries to fasten their tents to; the other, that they are the petrified bodies of the pursuers of a certain saint who, finding himself hopelessly outpaced, turned and cursed his over-confident foes. Had they realized his powers they would have taken care not to press on the heels of the holy man. Troubled in bed that night by a flea, I should have liked to add a few more to the existing monuments of the effect of skilled cursing, for there could be little doubt that I was indebted to the damsels of Carnac for the attentions of the unwelcome intruder.

*Thursday, August 31.* With a good E. wind we started early for Lorient, where the boy, his holiday ended, must leave us to return to work. We had a beautiful run all day, for, whenever the direction of the yacht's head was altered, the wind, with unusual consideration, changed also, and continued to blow from astern. By the time we were between the Ile de Groix and the entrance to the river the wind had worked to S.W. This carried us quietly up to the town. The land all round is low, and, as one approaches the river, the eye is caught, not by any of the accepted marks, but by the lofty grey time-ball tower in Lorient itself.

At 4 p.m. the yacht was anchored immediately below the town. The position did not, at first, win general approval, but the passing traffic was slight and the berth in itself was in no way uncomfortable. For all that, during the absence of the navigator and boy, who had hurried ashore to enquire about trains, a big dredger steamed up the river heading straight for the *Winnie*. When our case seemed to be hopeless, away with a loud

rattle went the dredger's anchor. She swung clear of the yacht, but lay unreasonably near.

*Friday, September 1.* We rose early to feed the boy for his journey. He was rowed up a narrow gut leading to the Commercial Harbour and landed with his bag within easy reach of a tram-line. We heard afterwards that he reached home safely, in spite of stifling heat, via St. Malo and Southampton. Lorient itself is a poor place from a yachting point of view, but lower down the river many yachts were sailing about, and there seemed to be comfortable anchorages on either side.

Starting at 10 a.m. we beat down on the E. side of St. Michel, an island that occupies the middle of the harbour, and were out of the river by 11.15 a.m. bound for Concarneau. The wind at sea came up from S.E., but fell very light. As the afternoon wore away we determined, if possible, to get near enough inshore to come to an anchor. A nasty strip of coast was ahead, fronted by a maze of far-extending reefs, the threading of which in the dark we were somewhat shy of undertaking. As we drew slowly nearer the land we met an open boat manned by two youngsters wielding oars of inordinate length. To balance the weight of the out-board portion a heavy stone was lashed to the butt of each oar—a clumsy device which we had certainly heard of but never quite credited.

By 7 p.m. we had crept into six fathoms, and anchored under the lighthouse on Beg ar Vechen point, immediately W. of the entrance of the Aven and Belon rivers. The coast hereabouts struck us as uninteresting. Its small harbours all dry out, and its rivers, without exception, are obstructed by pernicious bars. Though the sea was absolutely smooth, a S.W. roll kept the yacht extremely lively the whole night through.

*Saturday, September 2.* By 6.40 a.m. we were under

way with a gentle breeze E., which carried us as far as the Ile Verte, a distance of three miles. Then came simultaneously a dead calm and a thick fog. We drifted into a crowd of boats at anchor. Their crews were pulling in fish rapidly. Asked what they were catching the men replied "Mackerelle!" We had never seen mackerel caught in English waters with a hook from a stationary boat, nor had we ever seen mackerel so small as the fish they were catching. We wondered if the French and English word signified the same fish. We had to find, and leave to starboard, a buoy on a reef named Corn Vas. At 2 p.m. the yacht was heading W. with a faint air. The fog lifted a little and a buoy was sighted, bearing W.S.W., some distance away. We assumed that this was the Corn Vas buoy, though, even when every allowance was made for several hours' drift in different directions, we found difficulty in persuading ourselves that the buoy had not shifted from its proper position.

At 4 p.m. the buoy was reached. The Corn Vas buoy was red. This buoy had its base red, its upper part black. The colour did not trouble us much because the French are sometimes sparing of paint on their buoys and beacons. The course thence for two miles was N.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. to weather Le Corven de Trevignon, a rocky patch lying  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles seaward of Trevignon point. After a period of absolute calm a fine W.N.W. breeze came to rejoice our hearts. When we had made a couple of boards, the fog at last disappeared completely, and we found that we were not far from the group of islets and rocks called the Iles de Glenan. Pemfret, the largest of the group, seemed to be quite close—anyway, much closer to the yacht than the mainland. By a cross bearing between the lighthouse on Pemfret and that on the Ile aux Moutons, a low islet outside the group,



we fixed our position exactly, and learnt that the buoy we had rounded was the Basse Jaune, lying several miles S. of Corn Vas, the object of our search.

We had been making anxious boards where no tacking was necessary. The yacht's head was put N.E. With a strong free breeze she tore on her way direct for Concarneau, and we felt confident of a night's rest in harbour. But just before dark, three miles short of our destination, the wind failed abruptly. Somewhat disgusted, we brought up in deep water with the kedge and a long scope of rope near a nasty looking row of rocks, extending far into the water at right angles to the land. Their line is so straight and they stand so erect that no more appropriate name could have been hit on than the name they bear—Les Soldats.

*Sunday, September 3.* Up early, with a fresh N.E. breeze we beat up to Concarneau. We passed in between the beacon to starboard, a round, fat, squat tower painted red and easy to pick up, and the black buoy to port, and anchored at 8 a.m. in the *petite rade*. As we were bringing up it fell quite calm, and there was not another breath of wind throughout the whole day. The coast hereabouts is charming with its green hills sloping to the sea and ending in broken rocks and little cliffs, like the sides of a great amphitheatre. The bay faces S.W., but is protected from the onset of the Atlantic by the barrier of the Glenan Isles. We had approached the place with considerable misgiving. From our study of the sailing directions we apprehended many difficulties, but the entrance proved perfectly easy when once it was reached. The mass of detail given in the directions, though possibly necessary, is entirely bewildering.

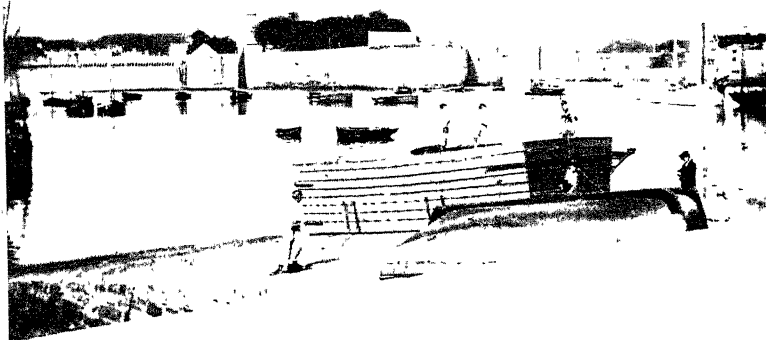
After *déjeuner* ashore at the Grand Hôtel des Voyageurs I returned on board. The other two remained behind to explore. The quiet cove in which the dinghy

had been left was found now crowded with youthful bathers of both sexes. The boat was undamaged, but half full of sand. Scarcely was I on board when the explorers appeared. The heat was too great for comfortable exploration. We spent most of the afternoon in the water. This was the hottest day of the whole cruise. Concarneau seems to be an interesting old-world town, given over to fish and to children. The former is betrayed by the smells ; the clatter of the latter's *sabots* never ceases.

Les petits sabots des petits Bretons,  
Petites Bretonnes,  
Chantent des chansons en differents tons  
Jamais monotones—*Toc, toc !*  
Chers petits sabots des petits Bretons  
Trop tôt l'on vous quitte ;  
Des petits Bretons les petits petons  
Grandissent trop vite ! *Toc, toc !*

BOTREL.

*Monday, September 4.* By 6 a.m. we were under way bound for Camaret or Falmouth, according to circumstances. A steady S.E. wind carried us out between Pemfret and the Ile aux Moutons to the open sea. Fear of calm and fog prevented our taking the passage between the mainland and the line of rocks and reefs that extend as far as Penmarc'h point. It proved, however, a bright clear day, and a stretch of many miles of coast was always visible. The land, scarcely raised above the level of the sea, fronted by its barrier of surf-dashed rocks, and marked at its W. extremity by the huge pillar of the Echemühl lighthouse, shone clear and bright and desolate in the burning sun. At 11 a.m., off Penmarc'h point, we lost the wind entirely, and were able to examine at our leisure the features of this low and dangerous point, more barren and desolate to look upon than even the shingly waste of our own Dungeness. The Echemühl



Concarneau



Pier for shipping iron ore, Castro.

lighthouse, erected near its extremity, is said to show the most powerful light to be found on the whole coast of France. At 3 p.m. we had drifted sufficiently clear of the point and its buoys and beacons to set our course N.N.W. for the Raz de Sein. Till dark the air was very faint. At 9 p.m. we found that what flutter of wind was stirring was blowing from ahead.

*Tuesday, September 5.* The wind remained light and ahead till 1 a.m., when a fine N.N.E. wind came which carried the yacht by 2.30 a.m. close to the Vieille lighthouse, but just too late to save our tide through the Raz. We bowed to circumstances, and hove the yacht to. At 5 a.m. the steward, who was in charge of the deck, startled us below with the information that a big boat was blundering right into the yacht. We found close alongside an open boat crowded with men hauling in an endless length of very narrow net. We saw nothing caught and could not discover what they were trying to catch. The tiller was put up and the yacht gybed clear.

At 6.30 a.m., with a gentle N.W. wind, we sailed well in under the mainland. At 7 a.m. the tide began to run northwards through the Raz. The yacht started her passage through on the starboard tack, but soon, as the tide was evidently carrying her down on the Chaussée, she was hastily put on the port tack. Swept to windward by the tide she went right through without another board. The Raz de Sein is, no doubt, a horrible place in bad weather. We were fortunate in passing through it, on each occasion, under the most favourable conditions.

By 8.15 a.m. we were clear of the Raz. Then the wind departed, and for hours the yacht rolled about helplessly. At noon there piped up a strong N.E. breeze. It was in our teeth, but by 1.15 p.m. we had worked up to the remarkable cluster of rocks off Pen Hir, on the

Camaret peninsula, called Les Tas de Pois. The tide was beginning to run against us through the Toulinguet passage. But the wind was strong and the water smooth. In a couple of boards the *Winnie* went through the passage triumphantly. With a scant wind and foul tide it was useless to attempt the Chenal du Four. At 3 p.m. we brought up at Camaret to spend the night.

It was quite a changed Camaret. The visitors were gone; its street was dull; it was too cold and dusty to dine outside; the dinner was not absolutely free from reproach. Still, there was Céleste! She received us with open arms and charming eloquence, and after dinner, while we drank our coffee, honoured us with her company. She loved, it appeared, the English—but yes! Never had she seen an Englishman *en colère*; no, nor were they ever *difficiles* but always contented with the food provided. She refused to bid us a definite farewell. “*Adieu, monsieur? mais non! À l’année prochaine, à l’année prochaine!*”

Wednesday, September 6. Starting at 6 a.m. with a nice E. wind we passed at 8.30 a.m., near slack water, Les Vieux Moines. The breeze carried us almost to La Grande Vinotière and then suddenly failed. We drifted onwards with the tide. After a long interval of calm there came a gentle breeze from N. which, by the time we had weathered Les Plâtresses, had grown into a good breeze. The course to the Lizard was N. by E. We laid the yacht to on port tack to bathe. Meanwhile the tide swept her to windward abreast of the Four lighthouse. At 0.40 p.m. it bore E., distant two miles. The yacht was tacked, the log put overboard, and we began what seemed likely to be a weary beat across channel.

But the fates were merciful. The wind worked to E.N.E., which enabled the yacht to lay her course easily.

It was a beautiful afternoon. The sea was quite smooth, and the wind remained steady. The yacht seemed to be travelling fast, but the log registered only about two miles an hour. Evening came, beautiful as the afternoon, and was gradually lost in a glorious night. From 9 p.m. to midnight there was a good breeze, yet the log declared that the yacht had run only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles in three hours. The log does for the speed of a yacht what the scales do for the weight of a fish: both rectify exaggerated estimates. Still, like the Scotch elder who was uncertain about his minister's ultimate salvation, I began to "hae ma doots" about the honesty of the log's tale of miles.

*Thursday, September 7.* All the early morning the wind was light, but never failed altogether. At 9.30 a.m., smoking my matutinal pipe at the tiller, while the other two finished their breakfast below, I saw through the haze a line of steamers crossing our course, and fancied more than once that I descried the loom of land on our port bow. But, as the log registered only fifty-two miles, I thought, in spite of my suspicions of its correctness, that I was probably the victim of a vivid imagination, and did not disclose my belief that we had the land nearly aboard. At 9.50 a.m. the log-line was overhauled. The rotator was found to be involved in a tangle of seaweed, and the end of the line kinked in wondrous wise. The yacht's speed had been under-logged, probably, the whole of the previous afternoon and night. I ventured to declare my conviction that we were close to the Lizard, but my words were received with incredulity, and I retired below to write up the log.

Less than half an hour later the steward, who was idly scanning the horizon to leeward with his binoculars, exclaimed: "Hullo, what's that?—why, it's a light-house!" The lighthouse on the Lizard showed dimly

above a sea of haze. In a few moments the fog was gone. The yacht was off Beast point. We had made an excellent landfall. To find ourselves 30 miles ahead of our supposed position was inspiring. The steward, after examining the state of his finances, formally invited us to dine with him ashore that evening, and we, with equal formality, gracefully accepted his kind invitation.

But we did not dine ashore that night.

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men  
Gang aft agley,  
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain  
For promis'd joy!

BURNS.

The wind died away to a faint breeze and drew directly ahead. Hour after hour we beat over a foul tide without making much ground. At 4.30 p.m. we crept past the Manacles buoy. We refused the offer of a tug to give us a pluck in, and secretly regretted our refusal. At 6.45 p.m. the yacht was wallowing about off the entrance to Falmouth harbour with a draught from N. too faint to be of any service. Suddenly an E. puff came strong enough to lay her over to her rail. This carried us as far as the harbour piers. Thereupon its death was as sudden as its birth. In a flat calm, impelled by a sweep, the yacht moved slowly on. Several offers of a tow from passing boats were politely declined. Should we, after our long trip made without help of any kind, condescend to accept a tow within a few hundred yards of our final anchorage? Perish the thought! At 8.30 p.m. the anchor was let go off Jackett's yard, and the cruise was over.

And a splendid cruise it had been. We were favoured by unusually fine weather, and had found the Bay of Biscay in its most complacent humour. But making

every allowance for exceptional conditions—halcyon weather is not, after all, suitable for long trips—we thought that to take a 9-ton yacht to Spain and back was something, not to be proud of, perhaps, but to be looked back upon with legitimate pleasure. I was happy in a splendid crew, and my thanks are due to each member of it—to the navigator, who, by his skill with chronometer and sextant, was largely responsible for the success of the trip ; to the steward for photographs and cunning management of the stores—never under his régime did the syphon fail or the necessary stimulant run short ; to the boy for willing assistance in every circumstance by day and night. We formed a congenial band. In spite, at times, of almost unbearable heat, hot words were few, and the few that were heard were invariably uttered by my ill-bridled tongue.

The time spent on the cruise was 37 days, the distance covered more than 1,100 miles. We had passed 11 nights under way, five nights anchored at sea or in roadsteads, 20 in harbour. As to pick up a good berth is often the only difficulty that confronts a stranger on entering a foreign port, I have mentioned the *Winnie's* anchorages at each place visited, without, however, wishing to imply that they were the only ones available, or even the best in every instance. Mr. Cowper's "L'Aberwrach to the Loire" is indispensable to any voyager on the coast of Brittany, and two cruises in Dr. Worth's "Yacht Cruising" will be of interest and of service. Apart from these, to the best of my knowledge, there have not yet been published any other books which describe the Brittany sea-board from the yachtsman's point of view. The Biscayan coastline of Spain yet awaits the attention of a descriptive explorer.

We stowed the canvas and foregathered in the cabin, pervaded, one and all, by the sense of gentle



melancholy that the termination of a cruise almost invariably imparts. The steward produced an unexpected bottle of whisky not yet despoiled of all its contents. We toasted the absent boy. Thereafter, with the only Spanish we had learnt in Spain, *Salud y Pesetas* (Health and money), we toasted each other, and soon went to bed to enjoy the sleep of perfect security.

# A CRUISE THAT FAILED

# A CRUISE THAT FAILED

1912

## I

### TROUBLE AT L'ABERWRACH

You gentlemen of England  
That live at home at ease,  
Full little do you think upon  
The dangers of the seas ;  
Give ear unto the mariners,  
And they will quickly show  
The cares and the fears  
When the stormy winds do blow.

MARTYN PARKER. ,

*L'appetit vient en mangeant.* In 1911 the Winnie was safely navigated to Spain and back ; for 1912 her crew contemplated an even more ambitious cruise. Cadiz was the goal fixed upon. If time did not allow of their return, they purposed to lay the yacht up there, and to bring her back the following year. Adventures are to the adventurous. We had adventures in plenty—but we failed to reach Cadiz.

The crew consisted of the navigator, the steward and myself, the skipper. The boy of last year's cruise, owing to the want of proper feeling on the part of unsympathetic employers, was, unfortunately, unable to join our company. He lost little by his absence, but will, probably, always regret that he had not a share in our calamities. To recall perils, of which one can

say *quorum pars magna fui*, is permissible even to the least conceited of men.

The weather of August, 1912, was execrable. Its only change was from bad to worse. The barometer remained persistently low, and, on the few occasions when it rose above 30, it tumbled back in hot haste, as though dizzied by the height of its modest ascent. All our worst blows followed a comparatively high barometer. The constant wet was heart-breaking. One's usual remark in France was "*Encore de la pluie!*" To which came the prompt and invariable reply: "*De la pluie toujours!*" The poet, indeed, sings:

It ain't no use to grumble and complain;  
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice:  
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,  
W'y, rain's my choice.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

But to ordinary folk, after three fine days in a month, such a depth of resignation is beyond attainment. And we started on a Friday! We were not a superstitious crew. Personally, I have no superstitions. Spilled salt moves me not; I will sit down the thirteenth at a dinner-table without wincing; my enjoyment of the port is not a whit diminished by the decanter reaching me the wrong way; I do not hesitate, even, to walk beneath a ladder, unless the man splashing paint about at the top is too glaringly conspicuous. But I start no more a-roving on a Friday!

The *Winnie* had received sundry alterations in her outfit since last year. The jib had been fitted with a Wykeham-Martin roller-gear. This met with general approval. The boat requires no change of jib. As soon as the winds begin to blow, the staysail alone is sufficient headsail. The binnacle, carried last year very inconveniently on a plank running from coaming

to coaming at the fore end of the cockpit, was now screwed down to the top of the meat-safe, a solid structure, on the port side against the cabin bulkhead. Here it was well sheltered, at a convenient height, in a position, apparently, of absolute security. The binnacle had a movable hood; with this slewed a trifle, the helmsman could see the compass card with equal ease from either side. Under the superintendence of Mr. Owen (of Falmouth) the yacht was swung for the adjustment of her compass. He gave us a deviation card. On one bearing only was there an error of five degrees; on every other bearing the error was either *nil*, or one of not more than two degrees. The whole transaction cost us thirty shillings.

*Thursday, August 1.* Navigator and steward reached the yacht at 6.30 p.m. They insisted upon dinner ashore. We dined sumptuously at the Green Bank Hotel. Weather, on the whole, looked fair.

*Friday, August 2.* Barometer 29.5, rising. We waited for the time-ball on Pendennis to fall at 1 p.m. to check the chronometer. At 2.15 p.m., with a light N. breeze, we slipped our moorings and ran out of the harbour under all lower canvas. The sun shone brightly, the barometer had risen to 30, our prospects seemed to be quite encouraging. At 4.30 p.m. we passed the Manacles buoy. At the proper hour I went below to prepare tea, but by the time the meal was ready my craving for food was entirely gone. Sea-sickness is a curious affliction. As a young man I never felt a qualm, and looked with amused contempt upon sufferers from *mal-de-mer*. "He jests at scars that never felt a wound!" Now, I rarely start upon a trip without succumbing to the malady.

At 6.55 p.m. the Lizard bore W. distant five miles. We took our departure and put the yacht's head S.S.W.,

intending to sight Ushant, partly to verify our position, chiefly to have, in the unsettled weather, a French port within convenient reach should unfavourable conditions compel a temporary withdrawal from the deep. The W.N.W. breeze died away at dark. After an interval of sail-slatting a N.E. draught brought quiet and comfort. At midnight the log registered 16.6 miles.

*Saturday, August 3.* The barometer, 29.9, was beginning to go back. The wind worked to S.E. The sky looked bad, the moon greasy and unhappy. I did not feel very happy myself, as I stood by the tiller from midnight to 3 a.m. Still, the wind was fair, and the yacht went plunging along merrily. At 5.45 a.m. the log registered 30.2 miles, which seemed an insufficient distance for a reach of nearly six hours. Heavy driving rain came, and the wind increased steadily in force. At 8 a.m. the log still registered only 30.2 miles. We found it much tangled up with seaweed and cleared the line with difficulty. We calculated that we were at the least ten miles ahead of the log, probably twenty. At 9 a.m. the barometer stood at 29.7. By that time the day was very wet and wild, and a nasty sea had made. We took off the mizen and rolled up the jib. Neither skipper nor steward wanted any breakfast. The navigator foraged about for himself, and the way in which, wedged in a corner, he devoured spoonfuls of jam and vast helpings of Cornish cream, proved, conclusively, that he had a hardy stomach. The sight in no way lessened the paroxysms of our discomfort.

The day grew worse. At 11 a.m. reefing could be no longer postponed. The wind, still S.E., was breezing up into half a gale. We tied down two reefs in the mainsail. Short though our canvas was, the yacht plunged ahead in a smother of spray. The sea, nearly abeam and all but breaking, poured over her continuously.

The deck was tight everywhere except in the seam along the cabin-head. Through this the water trickled in streams and drenched the cabin and all its belongings. We were pelted with rain and spray on deck, and a dry spot was found only with difficulty below. The invalids were recovering from their sickness. We fed ourselves on biscuits and nips of whisky, and hoped that a spell at the pump would not soon be required of our slackened energy. In spite of oil-skins we were all soaked to the skin and feeling pretty miserable. "You call this pleasure!" one groaned. It was pointed out that we were having a complete change from the irksome monotony of ordinary life, which is the real essence of a holiday, but the grumbler refused to be comforted, and commented bitterly on the folly of going to sea in any craft smaller than a liner. The barometer went back to 29.53 and then steadied.

At noon, as the weather showed no sign of improvement, we decided to make for the Chenal du Four, and to flee from the storm-swept water to the quiet shelter of Brest. No observation was, of course, possible, but we calculated that the bearing S. by W. would bring the yacht near to the N. end of the channel. She could just lay the course without much checking-in of sheets. At 1.30 p.m. a big steamer, looming up ahead through the mist, passed close across our bows. At 2.30 p.m. the log registered 69.9 miles. Allowing ten miles for the period when the log was out of gear, we calculated that we were, at the most, only eight or nine miles from the N.E. end of Ushant and, possibly, even several miles less. The weather was so thick that our radius of vision extended no farther than a quarter of a mile. It seemed best to lie to, for we had no wish to approach Ushant too closely, and, weary of our constant battering, we longed for a rest. The yacht was laid to on the starboard tack.

She lay pretty easily, but, as the slightly backed stay-sail was rather too much for the double-reefed mainsail, she forged ahead faster than was in keeping with absolute comfort. For all that, the change of motion gave great relief to our wearied bodies. The mizen, sheeted flat, would, no doubt, have kept the yacht's head to the wind, but, in the howling blast of the moment, we hesitated to add a stitch to already ample canvas. The value of the mizen in heavy weather was not, as yet, in any way appreciated.

A cross-sea struck us broadside on and poured into the cockpit and cabin in a green cataract. For some time we had contemplated with aversion the necessity of pumping. This addition to the yacht's cargo of water excited procrastination to action. We pumped her dry, and then dozed through the hours till nightfall. At 8.45 p.m. the sea was more moderate, the rain had ceased, all thickness had disappeared, and the barometer had risen a trifle. The wind, too, was lighter, but had worked almost to South. During the whole period of our lying-to the tide had been setting us N.E. Whither exactly the yacht had drifted we were unable to determine, but the change of wind gave us nearly a dead beat to get hold of the land.

It was my turn to take the tiller and to begin working an unknown distance to windward. The yacht headed S.S.E. and W.S.W. The wind, at times, was light for our canvas, but, on the whole, the yacht had as much sail as she could conveniently carry. My eyes were constantly strained to find the Ushant lights, but, with untimely obstinacy, they remained closely concealed. At 11.45 p.m. right ahead, bearing S.S.E. and distant about 15 miles, a light suddenly appeared. "White, flashing every five seconds?" Ile Vierge! L'Aberwrach lies hard by. L'Aberwrach is, at any time, a



delightful haven ; to the *Winnie's* exhausted crew it promised to be a very heaven upon earth. Barometer at midnight, 29.6.

*Sunday, August 4.* The navigator took charge. At 3 a.m. the yacht on starboard tack had fetched, by the help of a weather-going tide, nicely to windward of Ile Vierge. We found the leading lights into L'Aberwrach and held on, hoping on this tack to bring them into line. Thick mist and drizzling rain came on together, and, before we had brought them into line, the lights were unluckily obscured. The wind drew off the land, and the yacht's head fell away a couple of points. Soon we found under our bows a reef of rocks barring our further progress, and were obliged to put about. Daylight came very slowly ; mist and rain continued to obliterate the outline of the land and the leading lights.

Never before had we approached L'Aberwrach from this angle, and the entrance was found to be unexpectedly puzzling. We made short boards along the line of reefs, with plenty of wind but smooth water, and, at last, picked up the two buoys that guard the entrance, and were able to see our way clear to the first beacon, the Petit Pot de Beurre. This was fortunate, for still not a glimpse could be caught of the leading lighthouses. Soon we were inside and slipping up the river. At 6.20 a.m. we let the anchor go above the mole on the W. side of the channel. The dinghy was launched at once, and the kedje taken away. Whilst this was being done, the yacht drove into the middle of the river. Had she swung round the anchor and fouled it, or had insufficient chain been given to hold her ? The slacking away of more chain brought her to a standstill, and, in our weariness, we readily decided that the driving was the result of the latter alternative.

After a good sleep we went ashore. As we had hoped

to avoid France altogether, we had not provided ourselves with a Bill of Health backed by a French Consul's *visa*. We visited the *douane*. The official in charge seemed to be badly upset by our invasion of his privacy. "But, of course, you go to Brest—at Brest report yourselves!" We had no intention of going to Brest, but since we doubted whether our combined French was sufficient to explain the situation, we pursued the business no further. The man, evidently, did not want to be bothered by us; we had no wish to force fees upon him. We parted with bows and mutual relief. In the evening we dined at the Hôtel Belle Vue, for we were in entire sympathy with the idea that a dinner ashore is the natural consequence of a dusting afloat. Among the guests was a man with the biggest neck-tie we had ever seen. Oh, but a tie! A shade bigger it would have done away with the need of a shirt. Barometer at night 29.9.

*Monday, August 5.* At 6.30 a.m. a violent S.W. wind was blowing. The barometer still stood at 29.9. General appearances were most depressing. We remained at anchor; a move seemed impossible. At noon the barometer had fallen a tenth. We had a turn ashore in the afternoon, and discovered another hotel—the Hôtel des Anges. The building was originally a convent. The landlady insisted upon showing us all over the establishment. It had many large bed-sitting rooms, with polished floors and ceilings crossed by mighty beams. To anyone who wants a quiet holiday, free from every form of distraction, it would be for a season a desirable residence.

The barometer fell rapidly all the afternoon and evening. At 9 p.m. it stood at 29.44. It was raining heavily, and the sky looked full of wet. We hoped that the deep drop in the barometer meant nothing worse than more rain. The S.W. wind was strong. Suddenly at 10 p.m. we were

struck from N.W. by a terrific squall. It lasted but a few minutes, but, after a brief lull, the wind piped up savagely from W.N.W.

*Tuesday, August 6.* The yacht seemed to be all right. In spite of ebbing tide she rode quietly head to wind. It was, certainly, a wild night, but there was no apparent reason for the smallest anxiety. Yet sound sleep refused to come, and a sense of impending misfortune heavily oppressed my spirits. A troubled doze was abruptly shattered, by my feeling, or dreaming that I felt, the yacht strike the bottom.

A moment later it was found to be no dream. The yacht was fast ashore—fortunately, on good honest mud with, we hoped, no rocks immediately about. In the darkness and the rain we could not for some time make out on which side we were stranded. The time was 3.15 a.m., just after low water. It was blowing very hard, but not hard enough to account for the yacht's dragging, unless her anchor was foul. It was impossible in that wind to take away an anchor in our light pram. We dropped over the stern a heavy kedge, and carried the warp to the bow in the hope that, as the water rose, the anchor might hold the yacht, and bring her head to wind. It was, of course, a vain hope. As the water rose, she drove further and further on the mud. We ought to have held her by the stern till she was well afloat, and then slipped the rope away to the bow.

Those who know L'Aberwrach will remember how, half-a-mile above the mole, a big bank of mud extends from the W. shore almost across to the opposite side of the river. When daylight came, we found that we were driving with the rising tide over the top of this bank. At 5 a.m. the anchors seemed to be holding, and the yacht came broadside to wind and stream. The dinghy, which hitherto had nestled quietly to leeward beside her

bigger sister, now found herself to windward in an unpleasant position. She filled and sank. We raised her, emptied out the water, and passed her to the lee side again. We were concerned to see that her sculls were gone. They had probably been lifted bodily out of the boat by the sudden squall of the previous night. Nothing had happened since to account for their disappearance.

The wind gathered increased force, and soon drove the yacht's head round again. Only at 6 a.m., when she had been driven over the highest part of the mud, did she, at last, swing to her anchors. Thinking that our immediate tribulation was over, we hastily sought our blankets in the hope that our bodies might recover some portion of their long-lost warmth. We should, certainly, be high and dry soon after half-ebb, if we retained our present situation, but, in the howling gale that was now raging, a safe bed on soft mud seemed to be a doom to be desired rather than to be avoided.

The blankets brought little comfort, and the boon of sleep was still withheld from my weary eyes. My mind was unable to shake off an uncanny premonition of the approach of further misfortune. Nor did my uneasiness prove unwarranted. In spite of her anchors the yacht was driving up-stream as fast as a man could walk. We were drawing near to a spot where the upward course of the river for a short distance trends slightly to the westward. Right astern on the E. shore was a bight fringed with big boulders and pointed rocks, upon which the yacht must be sadly damaged, if not altogether lost. We were mightily puzzled what steps to take to stop her rapid driving to destruction. Before sail could be made she would be fast ashore. Our three anchors were in use. The dinghy was without oars. Even if oars had not been lost, the wind was so furious that we could

not have hoped to weigh in her one of the anchors, and lay it out in the channel. We seemed to be helpless.

The warp of the kedge was hanging in a bight as if the anchor were doing no work. We shifted it from the starboard to the port bow with immediate good result. The rope tautened, and the anchor seemed to hold. We could not understand why so slight an alteration worked so vast a change. But we troubled little about the why or the wherefore. The kedge held the yacht, and held her without a fathom to spare. Her keel was already tapping gently upon a rocky bottom. Had she driven a few yards further, her case would have been hopeless. The check gave us time to rescue the *Winnie* from the yawning mouth of destruction.

A big open boat, working down under close-reefed canvas, put about close abreast. Its three oilskin-clad occupants waved excited arms and shouted emphatic instructions. Only the words "*Arrachez-vous! arrachez-vous!*" were distinguishable. We brandished responsive arms with a show of cheerfulness which was stoically assumed to veil our consternation. It was now 8 a.m. In another hour it would be high water. We must shift at once, and the only possible way to shift was under canvas. While two of us double-reefed the mainsail and prepared it for immediate setting, the steward energetically hove in on the windlass. For a few moments the bower anchor held fast, probably caught on a rock, but afterwards came away quickly without hauling the yacht ahead. Flukes first it was raised to the surface of the water. The yacht had, after all, fouled it on Sunday morning at the moment of our anchoring. The smaller kedge we hauled on board by hand without much difficulty. Before long the yacht was riding to the big kedge alone.

Whilst we hastily cleared away the raffle forward, the

tapping on the bottom, which had ceased for a time, was gently renewed, showing that the yacht was once more upon the move. We dared not attempt to weigh the kedje, nor was there the smallest hope of canting the yacht's head from the shore and sailing off into deep water without further ado. After a hasty explanation of the manœuvre I hoped to accomplish, we set the canvas, and sailed the yacht on port tack till the kedgerope streamed out at right angles to the port bow and her keel was scraping heavily along the rockstrewn bottom. The tiller was put down and the yacht flew about.

In a moment she was out in the middle of the channel with the warp at right angles to the starboard bow. The bower anchor was let go. Now that it was clear it held instantly. The yacht was saved ! In less than two minutes we had clambered from the lowest depths of pessimism to the topmost rung of optimistic joy.

The sight at low water of the spot over which we had been lying filled our hearts with shuddering thankfulness for the yacht's escape. It was a nasty jagged reef ; and, though the sea was not very heavy, it was quite heavy enough to pound holes in the yacht's bottom upon the pointed rocks beneath. If we must be wrecked, we said vaingloriously, let us be wrecked with credit in open water ; to be wrecked in a river was bound to provoke scornful derision. Coming events cast no shadows before to trouble our improvident minds !

About 9 a.m. we breakfasted, and after the meal enjoyed a refreshing sleep. The barometer rose a shade, the rain ceased, and the wind dropped considerably. Happy in having saved the ship, we soon began to fret about the missing sculls. Could we but reach the land we felt confident of finding them cast up upon the shore. There were several boats at anchor near, but not for hours did a human creature appear. At last, about 2 p.m., a man

ran a barge-like structure from the W. shore to a patch of water on the opposite side from which projected, now that the tide was low, the heads of numerous sticks. A recollection of the Crouch, long before it became a crowded anchorage, caused me to recognize an oyster-laying. The man began to shovel sand overboard, but in answer to our shouts, he left the barge and boarded the yacht in a roughly-made and decrepit boat. We gave him rum, and explained what we wanted. He was a very intelligent man—he must have been, for he understood our French—and readily consented to put the other two ashore.

Along the beach the navigator went up and the steward down. The latter reappeared almost at once. He sat on a rock for awhile, and then went off in pursuit of the navigator. A long time later the navigator returned by a road over the hill, and was put on board. He had been tempted on and on by finding various empty bottles which he recognized as spent items of our stores, but he had seen nothing of the sculls. At last the steward reappeared. "Where's the navigator?" he shouted as the boat drew near to the yacht, "I got wind of the oars directly I started, and have been running after him ever since for French money to ransom them with."

Ashore they went again, and shortly returned in triumph. Our friend went with them to show the way to the cottage of the ancient man who held the oars in custody, and he added to his good deeds by leaving on the deck a round dozen of oysters. He departed with money in his pocket and a broad smile upon his face. Was it our French or our clumsiness in opening oysters that amused him?

It might well have been either. Our French we knew to be quaint, and never before had we opened an oyster. With patience and the expenditure of a knife-blade (the

steward's) we accomplished a laborious task. The navigator, fortunately, did not care for oysters. The steward and skipper gobbled down the lot, careless of the navigator's enlargement on the theory that oysters are out of season in any month that does not contain the letter R.

Just above where we were lying there is a beautiful bight on the W. shore with plenty of water, well out of the tide-way, sheltered from every wind that blows, and, but for its distance from the village, a most attractive anchorage. At its upper end is moored an old wooden warship, a torpedo school, our man informed us, "*de la République française*." Possibly, as a Breton, he regarded France as an alien country.

The wind at dusk was much lighter, but the sky looked thoroughly bad, and the barometer had risen only to 29.7. We went to bed early, feeling a pleasant lassitude after our long day and exciting experiences.

*Wednesday, August 7.* Wind W., not very strong. Barometer still 29.7, with a downward tendency. We did not know what to do. Like Captain Reece, of the *Mantelpiece*, who

Did all that lay within him to  
Promote the comfort of his crew,

I left the decision to the others, and they decided upon remaining. We walked to L'Aberwrach, and found that telegrams must be sent, not from the post office, but from the Semaphore. We had an excellent *déjeuner* at the Hôtel des Anges. The steward likened himself to the Alderman who, on scanning the menu card at a Lord Mayor's banquet, remarked: "I ain't hungry, but, thank God, I'm greedy!" Afterwards we entered into conversation with a gentleman who spoke English better than he understood it. He complained that his



chief difficulty in understanding was the astonishing rapidity with which the English spoke. We demurred, but failed to persuade him that the same complaint might legitimately be made against the French. His two daughters hung about, delighted by their father's command of a foreign tongue, or interested in the unshaven faces of my comrades. My bearded visage was, obviously, too old to be worth a second glance. Wind in the evening W.N.W., inclined to be strong; sky not good; barometer 29.88, rising.

## II

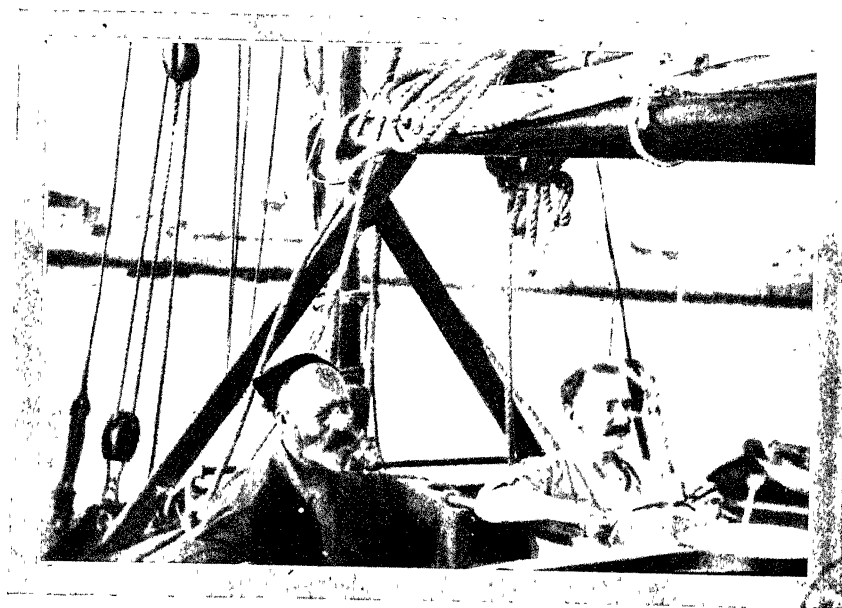
### DISASTER AT CAMARET

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;  
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
Stops with the shore ;—upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd and unknown.

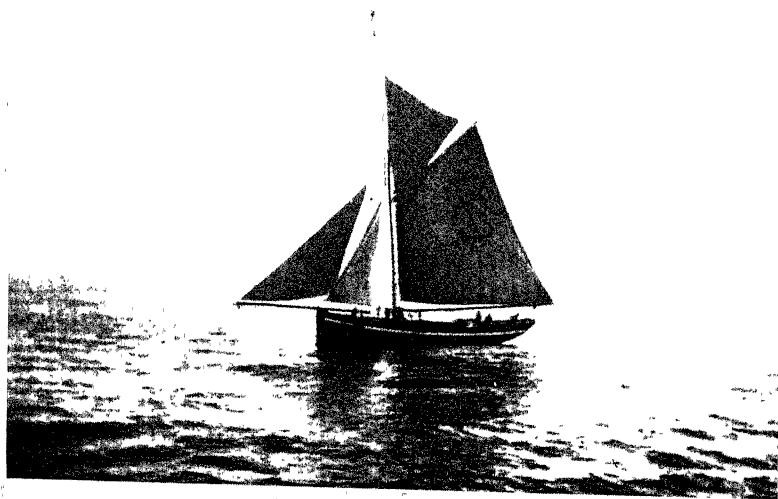
BYRON.

*Thursday, August 8.* Barometer 30, finer morning, wind W.N.W., a good breeze. Better weather at last ! we thought, and plucked up our depressed spirits. The day began with an awkward accident. While the kettle was being filled, the handle of the tap of the water-tank was unshipped, and dropped through a convenient chink into the bilge below. With ready hand the steward, by inserting a cork, stopped the flow of water till the handle was recovered and the tap turned off. The loss of our water would have caused farther grievous delay.

After a slow beat out against the tide we passed the Petit Pot de Beurre soon after noon. The wind was now W., and much lighter. Clear of the entrance we gave the yacht a long cast seawards, and pictured ourselves on starboard tack weathering the Porsal rocks and the Four lighthouse, and sailing merrily on through the Chenal du Four. But our hopes were cruelly brought to nought by the persistent backing of the wind, which



Skipper and Navigator



French pilot-boat off L'Aberwrach

set us beating slowly down the coast. At 5 p.m., when the S.W. running tide was nearly done, we were only abreast of the Four rock. From there the wind, now S.W., gave us nearly a dead beat to the beacon on Les Plâtresses. This was passed at 11 p.m. From there, had the wind remained in the same quarter, the yacht would have looked up to La Grande Vinotière. But the wind, with malicious playfulness, chose that moment to back to due South. Our weary beat continued.

Soon after 9 p.m. there was a heavy shower of rain. In its rear there came a beautiful night, very dark but quite clear. Lights beamed in every direction; Ile Vierge and the Four astern; the leading lights on Kermorvan and St. Mathieu ahead; to starboard Stiff and Crac'h lights on Ushant; and on the starboard bow various lights on the farther—S.W.—side of the archipelago of rocks and islets that lie between Ushant and the mainland. “Piccadilly!” muttered the steward as he gazed around. One cannot, of course, by the wildest stretch of imagination, compare the illumination of the Chenal du Four with the dazzling brightness of Piccadilly after dark, but, on a clear night, one is fain to admire the maze of lights by which its neighbourhood is guarded. Yet, in spite of their assistance, we went widely astray.

*Friday, August 9.* We had a nice working breeze, but made very little headway till the tide ceased to pour northwards. We beat onwards in the line of leading lights, opening them only to a prudent distance on either side. Some way S. or S.W. of Les Plâtresses was a green light which we could not identify from the chart, sailing directions, or Admiralty Light List. Thinking that it must be on a starboard-hand buoy, we held on boldly towards it, but we opened the leading lights so widely that we were frightened into hastily putting about. When the tide came with us we were swept to windward

fast. We kept an anxious look-out for the light on the Grande Vinotière, with a glance over our shoulders, from time to time, to see if we had passed into the red sector of the Corsen light—a light astern which, in conjunction with the Trezien light, guides the mariner past the Grande Vinotière, and through the intricacies of the S. end of the channel.

Suddenly we found ourselves right down upon the Kermorvan light. So near were we that the base of the lighthouse was visible. The usual road for strangers is W. of the Grande Vinotière, between it and a buoy bearing a green light, but the passage E. of it is quite safe, especially at high water. As it was just after high water, our unexpected position did not trouble us greatly. We had held on to the leading lights too long. Though we knew now within a little how the Grande Vinotière bore, we were unable to detect either the lighthouse or its light. We were driven to the conclusion that it was not burning that night.

While we were endeavouring to piece together the puzzle of our close neighbourhood to the Kermorvan light, the invisibility of the light on the Grande Vinotière, and the identity of the green light that had mystified us earlier, a fishing boat, sailing without lights out of Conquet, stunned our wits with a paralysing shock. She flitted like a ghost across our bows barely clear of the end of our bowsprit. Our side-lights were burning brightly. The boat took a risk and ran it hazardously fine.

We were on the port tack approaching a red light. This must be on a port-hand buoy. The tide swept us to windward so fast that we were unable to leave it to port. We were so close to the land that, for some dreadful seconds, we thought it was the red light on Les Vieux Moines, and peered ahead anxiously for the rocks.

But a moment later we opened the light of Les Vieux Moines on our port bow, and knew that we were quite safe from this danger. After a few minutes of tumbling about in a terrible tidal swabble, we were clear of the Chenal du Four and in smooth water. We put the yacht's head S.E. for Camaret, and, with a nice breeze, expected to be there soon in spite of the ebb tide. It was 2.30 a.m. when we rounded Les Vieux Moines. At 3 a.m. the wind fell very light and came ahead. At 10.30 a.m. we were becalmed off Camaret bay. Not till noon did we fetch an anchorage under shelter of the mole.

We had enjoyed the passage in spite of its slowness. To be at sea again was pleasant, and the voyage had not been without its moments of excitement. There was a more summer-like feeling in the air to-day, yet, while we hoped that fine weather was coming, we felt by no means confident of the fulfilment of our hopes. The sun had risen from behind a bank of pallid cloud, with a peculiar light copper-coloured tint, and the barometer had moved from 30 only to 30.02 in twenty-four hours. The head wind and reasonable distrust of the weather sent us to Camaret. We have sometimes wondered whether, had we hammered stubbornly on without waiting for a slant to carry us southwards, the yacht would have fared better in the open, or would have been overwhelmed with even more complete disaster than that which actually befell her in the harbour's mouth.

In the afternoon we paid a visit to our old friend Céleste at the Hôtel de France and had dinner there in the evening. On returning on board we found that the yacht, which we had left in a clear berth, was now closely surrounded by later arrivals. Barometer 30.01.

*Saturday, August 10.* In the early morning it began to blow hard from W.N.W. Barometer 29.98. There

was nothing amiss with the wind's direction : what kept us at our anchorage was its untoward violence. It blew hard all day, and the atmosphere was miserably cold withal. There was a constant arrival and departure of smacks under short canvas. They are fine boats of 20 to 25 tons, cutter-rigged and fitted with roller reefing gear upon their booms. When once the mainsail is set, the topping lift is unhooked from the end of the boom—for no reason that we could see unless to avoid entanglement when the reefs are being rolled in. They seemed to be wonderfully handy boats, and we could not but admire the skill with which they were brought up and got under way in a crowded anchorage. The French smacksmen has nothing to learn in the management of his craft. Barometer in the evening 30.2, wind still strong but nearly N. We went to bed cold, but inclined to be sanguine.

*Sunday, August 11.* Alas for our hopes ! We turned out early to find a dull morning with light S.W. wind. Barometer 30.3. It was Camaret's regatta day. People poured in by land and by water. The life-boat was sent down its slide amid applause, and, manned by a very scratch crew, pottered about the harbour for many hours. We flew our blue ensign at the mizen to honour the festival. A passenger steamboat came from Brest, dressed rainbow fashion, and flying a big red ensign at her truck. Our first thought was that the flag denoted a delicate compliment, but, as our presence was probably unknown when the flag was hoisted, we concluded that its commanding position was entirely accidental.

Though the wind was dead ahead, we were so thoroughly weary of our detention that we determined to go and examine the state of the wind and weather at sea. Soon after 2 p.m., when most of the smacks had

cleared off to race in the bay, and the tide outside was about to ebb to the S.W., we proceeded at our ease to get the yacht under way. To our astonishment the anchor remained an immovable fixture. We were foul of something exceedingly heavy. Though under the staysail the yacht was sheered in either direction, not the smallest advantage rewarded the manœuvring. Not a boat was within hail to summon to our assistance. When it began to rain heavily, we slacked away our chain again and took refuge below. Our disgust was somewhat mitigated by the reflection that we were losing very little through a further delay.

The heavy rain failed to extinguish the ardour of the merry-makers ashore. There was a constant banging of fireworks in the evening. Singing and shouting was audible till—for Camaret—a very late hour. At low water we tried once more to shift our anchor. We were quite unable to move it, and the pouring rain quickly persuaded us to desist from our vain endeavour. Barometer at night 30.1.

*Monday, August 12.* It rained hard all night. Barometer 29.82. There was not a breath of wind when, at low water, shortly before 10 a.m., we hove in chain gently till we were exactly over the something that had clutched our anchor. Then the steward felt about with the boat-hook. Suddenly we sighted the monster that held us with stubborn grip. Gradually, as the ripples subsided, we discerned the outlines of a sunken boat, slime-covered and half concealed in mud. Our chain was caught beneath its stem. A few vigorous digs with the boat-hook freed us from the obstruction. A moment later we found that our chain led beneath the cable of the *Silène*, a lately-arrived smack. Her crew, though roused from their first sleep, good-humouredly weighed their anchor and enabled us to get ours. We towed the yacht



further out, and brought up with the lighthouse on the end of the mole bearing N.

At noon the others went ashore to purchase provisions. Half-an-hour later the sun burst through the clouds, and for a few minutes enfeebled us with stifling heat. At 1 p.m. a S.W. wind was beginning to blow hard. The barometer had dropped steadily all the morning. While appearances were in no way disturbing, ordinary prudence bade us wait yet a while to see what the deep drop in the barometer might portend.

At 3 p.m., when we were sprawling about below half asleep, we were startled into wakefulness by the shock of a heavy blow. We found a smack—the *Cormoran*—with her stern pressed hard against the end of our bowsprit. By slacking away a few fathoms of chain we cleared the yacht, and the smack went driving away. Her crew was not on board, but men from neighbouring smacks soon swarmed about her deck. They gave her an immense amount of chain and at last brought her up. That her anchor was undoubtedly foul was regarded with the utmost unconcern. She seemed to be lying sufficiently far away, but it was our fate to have many further dealings with the *Cormoran* before the break of another day.

The S.W. wind lulled down at nightfall and the look of the sky, far from threatening, seemed to foreshadow the coming of a N.W. wind. But the barometer continued its steady fall. At 10 p.m., when we turned in, wearied with doing nothing, it had dropped back to 29.5. Ashore, Camaret renewed its regatta festivities; outside the bay, the estuary was busy with naval manœuvres; guns rattled, search-lights flashed, destroyers darted hither and thither. Without any prescience of our approaching lot we crept beneath our blankets and sank off to sleep.

About 11 p.m., without a note of prelude, the performance of our tragedy commenced. We were all abruptly awakened by an exceedingly violent squall which, howling from N., caught the yacht broadside on, and hove her over in a startling fashion. A moment later—bump!—something heavy struck us exceedingly hard.

The steward, in his sleeping garb, was the first up on deck. Rain was falling in torrents. Delaying only long enough to slip on sea-boots and oil-skins I hastily followed. Gleams from the riding-light showed me the *Cormoran*, herself the plaything of the bitter blasts, pressing with all her weight upon the forward parts of the helpless *Winnie*. The steward, working like a man possessed of a giant's strength, was trying to force the invader's stern from our starboard bow. Just as I was struggling to his assistance, he succeeded in moving the smack. Once started she slithered clear of our mizen rigging, and disappeared at once in the darkness, followed by ejaculations which were certainly not blessings. No hand was on board; not a hand was on board any smack with which we came in contact that night of disaster. Possibly the smacksmen habitually sleep ashore when their vessels are in harbour; possibly they had not recovered from carousals occasioned by the regatta.

The wind blew with truly terrifying fury. We were greatly afraid that the extra strain put by the *Cormoran's* weight upon our chain might have started our own anchor. We could give the yacht no more cable; all her 30 fathoms were already out. We stocked the big kedge and bent the warp on all ready to let go if the yacht began to drag.

*Tuesday, August 13.* To port a Douarnenez sardine boat, which had brought up after dark needlessly close to our berth, came sheering again and again almost

alongside the yacht. Her crew under their canvas protection forward chattered incessantly in the greatest excitement. Every time we drew together, a voice shouted in French or Breton, we knew not which, some incomprehensible phrase. The tone of the voice seemed to suggest satisfaction. We responded regularly with a cheerful "Oui, oui!" though cheerfulness was far removed from our apprehensive hearts.

The wind lulled a trifle. Up the bay four destroyers steamed blazing with lights. Three brought up outside. One continued its way round the mole and dropped anchor inside the harbour. The weather, we learnt later, had driven them in from the manœuvres outside. At short intervals they swept their searchlights around. By the wavering light we caught momentary glimpses astern of smacks crashing into one another, and of a surf-beaten rock-bound shore.

The lull did not last long. The wind lashed itself to fresh fury and fell upon us with redoubled force from N.E. It soon rolled up a heavy sea. Our position with regard to the sardine boat began to change slowly. We were going astern. Then the boat sheered across our bows right under the bowsprit. As the yacht plunged, the bowsprit, abruptly checked by the boat, cracked and cracked again, though it did not actually part till some little time later. We began to drive astern fast, no doubt to the relief of the sardine boat, but to our own mighty perturbation.

The navigator and myself got the kedge over, and paid away the warp, while the steward overhauled it as it came out of the stern locker. The wind was so violent that, with our faces towards it, we found it difficult to breathe, and its roar and shriek were so loud that a vigorous shout rarely reached the ear intended. While engaged forward we missed seeing much of what

actually happened. But, apparently, the yacht passed between two smacks, each of which paid her some attention without doing harm beyond snapping off the bowsprit already hopelessly damaged. We paid out a lot of warp. The navigator nipped aft. I made the rope fast, and hoped that the two anchors together would stay the yacht from driving much nearer the rocks.

As I rose from my knees I was startled by a wild and warning shout from aft. Heavens, how fast events had marched in the last few seconds! But a short time ago things had been sufficiently ill with us, as we drove shorewards before a pitiless blast in a sea so heavy that our footing on deck was with difficulty maintained; now they were worse—in fact, as far as could be seen, utterly desperate. We were down upon two smacks in close proximity. On our starboard hand was the *Cormoran*—*fons et origo mali*—to port another smack named, as we afterwards learnt, the *Laurent Joséphine*. The former had lost her bowsprit. The bowsprit of the latter also had been carried away, but had not reached the water. It projected at right angles from the neighbourhood of the shrouds, held fast on board by some of its gear. The yacht was carried between the two vessels beneath this terrible spar, which, as the smack pitched and rolled, lashed to and fro like a flail. It proved an insatiate monster of widespread destruction.

With one fell blow it shore off the mizen-mast close to the deck, and tumbled it over the steward still engaged in the cockpit. He had a marvellous escape from death. Fortunately he heard the crash, and was quick enough to escape all injury by throwing himself at full length on the floor of the cockpit. Next, with an upward stroke, the bowsprit smashed the main-boom. In another minute it tore away the iron-horse of the mainsail, and sent the dinghy, whose painter was hitched

thereto, flying away before the wind and sea. The horse, fast to a convenient length of main-sheet, joined in the diabolical work, and assisted in taking charge of the after part of the ship.

While the activity of the bowsprit rendered the yacht untenable aft, the deck forward proved to be the theatre of even greater peril. The jib, liberated from the traveller on the bowsprit, whirled with deadly frenzy about my devoted ears the heavy roller-gear attached to its clew, and put my life in constant jeopardy till it twisted round the *Cormoran's* fore-stay, where it quickly slatted itself to pieces. Fortunately the only victim of the roller was the riding-light. This, with one spiteful blow, it smashed with such complete thoroughness that nothing was left of it except the ring and the lanyard that lashed it to the stay.

Serious damage was soon done by the stems of the smacks. Previous to the yacht's insinuation between them, the two smacks had been alternately butting each other; now they made common cause and fell on the yacht with merciless onslaughts. The *Cormoran* dealt her many a shrewd blow, but the damage wrought by the *Laurent Joséphine* went near to breaking our hearts. In a few short moments she had scrunched up the rail and covering-board forward, and proceeded to cut through the deck-planks a relentless way. Our slight fenders, suitable only to protect our sides against the ordinary squeezing that all yachts may expect to suffer upon occasion, were useless against the repeated ramming of our heavy and malevolent antagonist. Only a stout rubbing-band and her flaring bows still saved the *Winnie* from a premature doom. Had the impact of the smack's stem fallen abaft the rigging, where the yacht was more wall-sided, her fate would have been, undoubtedly, sealed. Nothing then could

have saved her, and nothing, so far as we could see, could be done to save her now.

The wind still blew with unmitigated fury—the fury, not of a summer breeze, but of a bitter gale. The three boats, inextricably locked together—pinned by the bowsprit on the one side, and held by the jib wound round the *Cormoran's* forestay on the other—were driving steadily towards the cliffs. Even if the yacht were not actually sunk beforehand, would not her case be desperate when she struck, overlaid, as she would be, by her heavier neighbours? Must she be abandoned?

The idea at first seemed preposterous. Yet it was speedily borne in upon us that this was the only step left to us to take. We were powerless to help the yacht, and were in peril of our lives while we remained on board. A smack was likely to endure a much longer battering on the rocks than the more lightly built *Winnie*. We decided to take refuge on the *Laurent Joséphine*. Circumstances bade us not to stand upon the order of our going, but to go at once. The other two secured their money. Watching their opportunity, they scrambled on board the smack and called loudly to me to follow.

It was no wish to exact a skipper's privilege of leaving his ship last that prevented me from being the first to tumble over the smack's rail. I was fully persuaded that the *Winnie* had but a few more moments to live. But my money was below, and a decision not to leave it behind was quickly arrived at. Drowning was not an unlikely fate, but my purse was not heavy enough to hasten my death.

I was still forward. Access to the cabin through the fo'c'sle was barred by a bolted hatch. To secure the money the demon bowsprit must be faced at close

quarters. The chief danger lay in the impossibility of anticipating its next move, whether it would roll forward or aft, leap into the air, or imagine itself a spear and try to pierce the *Cormoran's* side across our decks. For a few seconds it might lie comparatively quiescent—then, in a fit of frenzy, it tried to do all its tricks at once. Yet the danger was, finally, easily circumvented. Stretched at full length along the deck I wriggled a way beneath it to the cockpit, protected from assault by the height of the cabin head.

The cabin, save for the noise made by the bowsprit upon its roof, and the groan raised by the yacht as she shuddered under the blows from the implacable smacks, was delightfully quiet after the stress and turmoil of the deck. The lamp poured a bright and cheerful light around. Was I never again to enter this cabin?—never again to sail the *Winnie* over the salt seas? It seemed hard luck on the boat and her owner. I am not sure that my eyes did not fill with tears of vexation. But there was no time for sentiment or self-pity. My comrades kept shouting insistently for me to join them on the deck of the smack.

My money was soon pocketed and my sea-bag seized. Let us save, methought, as much as we can from the doomed ship. I crawled forward—from the fore deck only could the smack be boarded—and passed the bag to the others. A second journey aft was made to save their bags. Lastly, I found their pipes and tobacco, stuffed half a dozen boxes of matches into a pocket, seized a bottle of whisky, and prepared to abandon the ship. But yet another return was made to the cabin. The bottle of whisky was found to be almost empty, and we had before us many hours of wet and cold to endure. I pulled a full bottle from the spirit locker, crawled beneath the bowsprit for the last

time, and stood ready to clamber on board the smack.

As my arms were resting on the bulwark, and I gathered myself together to spring, that hell-hound of a bowsprit, the mischievous agility of which had been for the moment forgotten, rolled, with a squeal of delight, over my left forearm, crushing it horribly, and debilitating it with agony. It rolled off—then on again—and off once more. All power in that arm was gone. My footing on the *Winnie's* deck had been lost and my rubber boots found no support on the smooth side of the smack. My body, its weight too great to be upheld by one hand, was already slipping down between the two vessels when, fortunately, the navigator, who had just put the bottles in a place of safety, without knowing in the least what had happened, realized that I was in difficulties, and pulled me over the rail, neck and crop, with no show of ceremony. Even above the howling of the gale he had heard my yell of despair. It is, evidently, a part of the navigator's mission in life to lug me into safety by the seat of my trousers. On one of the *Senorita's* cruises he did me the same benevolent service.\*

It was about 1 a.m. when we boarded the *Laurent Joséphine*. We lay huddled together forward, seeking beneath the bulwarks some shelter from the shrieking wind, while the rain came hurtling down upon us in savage glee. We were miserably cold and wet. The other two were barefooted, with only oilskins over their sleeping clothes. My case was better so far as clothing was concerned, but my arm gave me exquisite pain, and soon swelled to an inordinate size.

The yacht and her neighbours continued to drag steadily like one boat. By occasional gleams of the

\* "Coastwise-Cross-seas," page 173.



searchlights we saw astern a small cove, a mere dent in the almost unbroken line of sheer cliff. If we fetched in there, the likelihood of saving our lives was reasonably good; if not, our only chance—for swimming was out of the question—seemed to lie in the possibility that the smack would not be battered to pieces before the tide left her high and dry, and allowed us to walk ashore. High water was due at 3 a.m., the probable time of our striking.

The cabin resisted all our efforts to force an entry. The *Laurent Joséphine* was driving rapidly down upon another smack, and we were most anxious to be out of the way of breaking spars and falling blocks during the ensuing engagement. A close scrutiny showed us a way into the smack's fore peak, which, if it gave little comfort, did at least shelter us from the wind and the rain: Here we smoked and sipped whisky at intervals till daylight, with frequent visits to the deck to see if the *Winnie* was still afloat.

Ashore, later, we were repeatedly asked: "Were you not afraid? *Mais non?* But just a *leetle?*" No fear whatever troubled me personally. I was exceedingly sorry for myself, but the pain of my arm was too great to permit any forecasting of coming events. So far from troubling about impending death were the other two that they were picturing, even with chuckles, a sort of royal progress from the scene of shipwreck to the Hôtel de France, and the astonishment of its staff and guests at the sight of their meagre and inappropriate garments. Their fancy, too, was greatly tickled by finding my straw hat among the articles saved from the yacht. It was a hat of no value at its best, hard usage had brought it to the verge of disintegration, and in answer to their laughing jeers there came to my lips no plausible explanation of its rescue.

However, it served a good purpose, it gave us something to laugh at in the midst of our wretchedness. For two or three hours, without actually despairing, we thought little of the chances of the yacht and not much of our own.

However, in spite of her punishment, the *Winnie* still remained afloat, and we were not yet battling with breakers or endeavouring to scale precipitous cliffs. Shortly before daylight we were aroused from an uneasy doze by the happy consciousness of an improvement in our affairs. We hurried on deck. The wind had gone back to N., and the boats were lying more comfortably together. Feet alone separated the *Laurent Joséphine* from the smack astern, but she had ceased to drag. The demon bowsprit, weary of ill-doing, had fallen overboard, and was playing the part of a fender. The wind was still very strong, but had abated much of its ferocity, and the sea was certainly less heavy. Our weary eyes brightened and our spirits rose high. We were no longer assailed by disturbing doubts about our safety, and we became sanguine, nay, confident, of saving the yacht in spite of the grievous injuries inflicted by her bulkier neighbours. How vast a change in our expectations had been effected in the brief space of thirty minutes! At 3.15 a.m. our prospects were most dismal; at 3.45 a.m., our late peril almost forgotten, we were discussing the question of getting the yacht repaired.

The hours of darkness had seemed endless, but, at last, the dawn began to break. We gazed down upon the *Winnie*. She was a woeful wreck, but the stout old boat had survived her pummelling. She had been built, originally, for a working quay-punt, to lie alongside ships, and to endure heavy blows. The *Laurent Joséphine* had failed to break through her rubbing-band, and

the *Cormoran* had done less harm than might have been expected. The damage was all above the water-line, and we speedily determined to return to the yacht. The others jumped below to cover with dry clothing their shivering bodies. To me was left the duty of remaining on the smack to throw back our belongings. Owing to my injured arm, and a widening gap between the smack and yacht, my bag failed to find safe lodgment on her deck. It slipped back into the water between the two vessels. Thereupon I had my second accident, and narrowly escaped a violent death.

I seized a shroud with my right hand, leant far over the bulwarks, and, forgetting that my arm was powerless, caught hold of the bag with my left hand. With sweating brow and gritted teeth I put forth all my strength. But my efforts were altogether unavailing. All lifting power had departed from my arm. While I was hanging over the side with my head below the level of my heels, the two vessels sheered rapidly together. With difficulty—and barely—my head was lifted clear. Jerusalem, that was the closest of close calls! Sudden death has looked me in the face before, but never at such desperately close quarters. But my escape was not absolute. The *Winnie* caught the tip of my shoulder with a sickening blow. My left arm was useless all the rest of the trip. With a groan I collapsed upon the deck, but pulled myself together sufficiently to summon the navigator to rescue the bag before it floated out of reach of his arm.

In a few moments I recovered sufficiently to board the yacht, and, going below, was surprised to find the others giving vent to wild chuckles. They were as yet unaware of the extent of my injuries. "Skipper," cried the steward, "what do you think was in the full bottle you passed on board the smack?"

"Why, whisky, of course!"

“Not a bit of it! You grabbed the only bottle of limejuice we have on board.”

I could not help smiling grimly myself. Limejuice for the cold and wet and misery of the previous few hours! The most fanatical advocate of temperance must have regarded it with loathing. Fortunately, the whisky in the opened bottle proved sufficient for our wants.

Broad daylight came. What a scene of wreckage it disclosed! Bowsprit and mizen-mast were gone, main-boom broken, main-sheet horse smashed in two, windlass damaged, fore deck burst open on both sides, well-coamings aft and rail forward destroyed, canvas covering of cabinhead in rags, port shrouds carried away, riding-light lost. Indescribable confusion everywhere. Dinghy and every spar had disappeared. After surveying with gloomy eyes the state of affairs on the deck, the navigator and myself were startled to notice that the binnacle, torn from its fastenings, had vanished from the cockpit. “Where the deuce has it gone?” we exclaimed in the utmost perplexity. The steward, who was tying himself into knots, like a professional contortionist, to obtain a good view of the sole of his left foot, shouted from below :

“I know where its glass has gone—into my blessed foot! I thought I trod on glass when I stepped on board. Just you look by the shrouds.”

We looked and found a little pool of shattered glass. But how had the binnacle been ripped away from its sheltered corner, to begin with?—and how, in the second place, had it managed to shed its glass so far from its proper home for the undoing of the unsuspecting steward? The mystery, at first sight, appeared inexplicable, but further examination suggested a possible explanation. The heel of the bowsprit is somewhat short and ill adapted for the belaying of thick ropes. Some time during the night the kedge-warp had become unhitched. There

was still plenty of it to spare in the stern locker. As the yacht dragged, the warp paid itself out, and a bight must have slipped round the binnacle and dragged it remorselessly away. This explanation, however unconvincing, is, undoubtedly, correct.

The navigator succeeded in boarding the *Cormoran*. When he had cleared our jib from the fore-stay, the vessels fell apart so quickly that he was unable to return to the *Winnie*. We were compelled to chuck him a line and haul the vessels together again. The crew of the *Laurent Joséphine* arrived. Their skipper danced about the deck in a state of great excitement. Evidently he thought we had carried away his bowsprit. I was too sore and weary to try to explain that we were guiltless. Cautiously and gently her crew hove on the chain, and the *Laurent Joséphine* passed clear across our bows. Our chain and kedge warp led beneath her bottom. How they got there without fouling the smack's cable is very difficult to explain. To suggest witchcraft sounds foolish, but we have no more reasonable suggestion to offer.

And now the yacht was clear, riding to two anchors. At 6 a.m. the sun shone forth brightly, only a moderate N. wind was blowing, and the sea had nearly subsided. By daylight we were able to reconstruct an outline of the yacht's nocturnal vagaries. Had the wind continued N., she would have driven clear of everything till we could bring her up. All the mischief was due to the change of wind to N.E., which drove us among the vessels crowded together in the harbour's entrance. For the wind to fly suddenly from S.W. to N. and then to N.E. is, surely, very unusual. A similar instance cannot be recalled from my own personal experience. But for the damage to the yacht and my injured arm, the events of the night would have seemed only an evil dream. We

congratulated one another that we had come through without worse disaster. My own hurts, certainly, were grievous, but there was great ground for thankfulness that, amid the dangers from falling mast and madly whirling roller-gear, no limbs had been broken nor heads smashed.

At 10 a.m. a passing boat took the others ashore to arrange at the shipyard about immediate repairs. I remained behind to nurse my arm, and to clear up a little the raffle on our deck. Nearly every smack in the harbour showed unmistakable marks of cruel ill-treatment. Two were ashore, each, by good luck, in a little cove. One was on her broadside, the other propped up against the cliff. Both came off next high water apparently uninjured.

The navigator soon returned with the ship-builder's son. After inspecting our damage he said that the yacht must be brought into harbour for the convenience of the carpenters. Perfect understanding was difficult on account of the weakness of our French and his complete ignorance of English. We were unable to make out where he wanted the yacht to be laid. We overcame the difficulty by bidding him send a man to pilot us to the right berth. The navigator accompanied him ashore ; there was nothing further to be done on board. My amusement for several painful hours was confined to bathing my arm and shoulder with hot sea-water. The fomentation was comforting for the moment, even if it did no permanent good.

Shortly before high water two men arrived. Double-reefed, the mainsail stood satisfactorily without a boom. The yacht was soon laid alongside the quay nearly abreast of the Hôtel de France. The building-yard is on the opposite side of the harbour. No doubt the yacht was placed beside the quay because we had no legs on board

to keep her upright. An apologetic crew was there to greet my arrival. They had arranged to return on board with the men, but, through some misunderstanding, failed to reach the trysting-place early enough.

The steward had enjoyed an exciting time. During the navigator's interview with the builder he sat in front of the Hôtel de France, emptying a *petit verre* and wondering why Providence had placed powdered glass beneath his inoffensive foot. Incuriously he saw approaching a crowd of about fifty youngsters. But incuriousness soon gave place to interest. In the centre of the throng a boy proudly wheeled a hand-cart on which the dinghy perched. Beside and behind marched others, bearing, the one a boat-hook, another the topsail yard, a third the spinnaker boom. He recovered all the gear swept from our decks except the sweeps. These, being about the size of the oars used in the sardine boats, were probably considered too useful to be restored. With the help of Céleste adequate reward was paid to the actual finders. The pram had been damaged on the rocks, but not too badly to destroy the hope of temporary repairs.

As it was impossible to live on board by the quayside in any comfort—by half ebb the upper portion of the harbour is an expanse of indescribably filthy and evil-smelling mud—arrangements had been made for our residence at the Hôtel de France during the period of the yacht's repair and refitment. The sleeping accommodation of the hotel was fully occupied, but we had very comfortable beds assigned to us a few doors off at the Café du Nord.

### III

#### HOTEL LIFE

And the last boats came stealing o'er the bar,  
And the immeasurable sea lay bright and bare  
And beautiful to all infinity  
Beneath the last faint colours of the sun  
And the increasing kisses of the moon.

NOYES.

Eight days were required for the refit of the yacht. Of these days one was a Sunday and one the Fête de l'Assomption, which the men engaged on our work kept as a whole holiday. Repairs were also much hindered by wet weather. The moment the yacht was wrecked came the only chance in the whole month of reaching Spain. The gale, we read later in the papers, wrought great havoc on the N. Spanish coasts, but in its rear came three or four days of beautiful N. and N.W. winds, which, had we been able to make use of them, would have hurried us to port before the outbreak of another gale. As it was, the lateness of the season and my injured arm brought the cruise to a premature conclusion, however fine it might please the weather now to become.

Life ashore was monotonous, but, on the whole, not unamusing. During our brief stay we learnt more of the French, their habits and customs and language, than we had succeeded in learning the previous thirty years from fortuitous landings and casual meals. We were charged five francs a day. The proprietress was more than honest. We discovered, on scanning her bill at the end of our stay, that she had omitted various items, and was robbing



herself of a goodly number of francs. The proprietress is the *Veuve Goff*. She, however, never appears. The hotel is managed by *Céleste*.

The French nation is said to be run by its women. *Céleste* is a fine sample of a capable sisterhood. She had her eye everywhere, and kept the whole establishment going without fuss or visible effort. And her skill in interpreting halting French and clumsy signs was marvellous to a degree. She rarely failed to comprehend what we wished to express. And, further, she made us understand what she said in reply—and a woman who could do that, we knew, could do anything! She professed, as she had done the year before, a great affection for the English, which we were base enough to attribute to bare-faced flattery—"Methought the lady did protest too much!"—and she was greatly concerned that no English visitors had appeared this year owing to the suspension of the running by the G. W. Railway of the boats between Plymouth and Brest. Therefore, it may be supposed, she bestowed upon us a double portion of an affection that no opportunity, so far, had been granted her of dissipating. Anyway, whatever the reason, she treated us with exceptional kindness.

All our fellow guests were very friendly and sympathetic in our misfortune. When a dish of solid food appeared, one of my comrades was, of necessity, called upon to cut up my portion. This attracted attention and led to explanations. When, on one occasion, the loose sleeve of my flannel jacket was incautiously pulled up to show, in response to kind enquiries, the state of my bruised forearm, the whole room burst into exclamations of solicitous dismay. The arm certainly was a sight to see, swollen almost to bursting point, and blotched all over with a motley mixture of blues and blacks and greens and yellows. Hastily it was hidden from view, and a blush spread to the

roots of my hair—at least, so I was told—but the episode removed all feelings of restraint and shyness on either side. I found myself perched on a pedestal as a heroic martyr, not only in the hotel but also, we soon discovered, throughout the whole village. The elevation was embarrassing. The pain at times was excruciating, but my mind was soon convinced that a man ought to be allowed to dree his weird in silence, untroubled by abashing comments on his stoical fortitude.

We could not decide with any certainty the social standing of the inmates of the hotel. None appeared to be aristocrats; on the other hand, nothing in their manners at table, or at other times, was in any way offensive. They were all, doubtless, middle-class folk in comfortable circumstances. No one dressed for dinner in the ordinary sense of the term, though several of the ladies made some change in their attire. One, in particular, a strapping young woman, evidently not long married, appeared every evening in a different dress. After the third or fourth night we thought she must begin to work through her wardrobe again. But we were mistaken, she had with her at least eight different costumes. And one man, a dandy with a most carefully kept beard and moustache, managed every day to garb himself in something fresh. But the rest of us sat down to our dinners without any attempt at a change. In fine weather our meals were served on little tables planted on the pavement, or even, if need demanded, far out upon the road. When it was wet, all the guests were tightly crowded into the dining-room. Several children, tiny tots of five and six, sat down to dinner every night, and did not go to bed till their parents retired. Bachelors and maiden ladies always have strong views about the proper bringing-up of infants. The steward waxed wrathfully eloquent about the iniquity of depriving the children of their

proper amount of sleep. It may be that French vivacity requires less sleep than British stolidity.

As soon as our first shyness was conquered we plunged recklessly into French. Since we were only passing strangers, the duration of whose stay was incalculable, we had no fixed places allotted to us at table, but were shifted about at every meal to suit the convenience of the staff. Consequently we had a constant change of neighbours. Our usual method of commencing a conversation was to imply, with ingratiating assumption, that Madame or Monsieur spoke the English language. Usually we received a prompt and regretful reply: "*Mais non ; pas du tout !*" But the ice was broken. For the rest of the meal all within hearing listened with keen interest and politely veiled delight while their inoffensive language was butchered with ignorant brutality. Twice only did we elicit an admission of a slight acquaintance with English ; once from a lady, once from a young man. Then in Vergil's words :

Conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant.

Silence fell on the whole room ; all fixed their rapt gaze upon the audacious individual who had the temerity to claim some knowledge of a foreign tongue. The lady proved that she did know some English, but she once puzzled me completely by saying, "Will you be kind enough to pass the gravy?" As we were at the moment busily engaged upon *langouste* (crayfish) I could not imagine what she meant, and only concentrated upon her face a fatuous smile. The steward, sharper than his skipper, saved the situation. He passed the mayonnaise sauce which was by my hand—and was the condiment desired. The young man chattered broken English with amazing volubility. He had lived in England. Paris was his home, and he assumed, to the

best of his ability, the pose of a gay dog. He damned Camaret with faint praise. Of fishing he was fond—but yes, very fond indeed! But the sport! The sport was his chief delight. He had not brought a gun because there were no gulls to shoot till the winter storms drove them in from the sea. The wretch! But we endured him. He had a very pretty sister who, we were vain enough to think, regarded us with friendly eyes.

The food supplied was plain, but ample in quantity, and beautifully cooked. One day in our honour we had beef-steak at *déjeuner*. We knew what it was from the menu, but it bore no resemblance to any beef-steak we had ever eaten before. Hypocritically we pretended to the beaming Céleste that we enjoyed it immensely. Several excited men demanded to be told the correct way to spell beef-steak. We spelled it slowly and distinctly so many times that, at last, we became confused, and began to doubt if we knew how to spell the word ourselves. No one seemed satisfied with the correct spelling. Our sporting steward scented a bet, and very likely he was right. This was a decidedly hilarious meal. The wag who wrote out the menu cards—a guest possessed of a stylographic pen—entitled one dish *Choux à la Céleste*, to the great delight of the lady whose name had been impudently borrowed.

One evening we were sipping a liqueur—a whisky and soda, unfortunately, was beyond the resources of the hotel—preparatory to retiring for the night. At one table the members of a family party were playing cards; Céleste was spending a moment of leisure in making up her books. The room otherwise was empty. Céleste was always ready for a chat. Never before had I found conversation in French so easy. I sailed along gaily, seldom hesitated for a word, and was exceedingly pleased with myself. Pride ever cometh before a fall. Then a

girl in the card party tittered, a man guffawed, Céleste gave a little squeal, and in a moment everyone was rolling about, shrieking with uncontrollable laughter. We were considerably startled, but the laughter was contagious. We too were soon roaring our loudest—goodness alone knows at what! We never discovered the cause of the outbreak, whether it was due to my accent or to some dreadful *faux pas*. The members of the card party apologized most abjectly for their unseemly mirth, and begged monsieur to continue; and monsieur did, but in his own language. Two of the party lived in London and they all knew English well.

Several days of our detention had passed before Antoinette appeared on the scene to add an interest to our life ashore, and to facilitate the conveyance of our wishes to the shipyard. One morning at *petit déjeuner* the navigator informed us that he had but a moment before escaped, with questionable credit, from an awkward encounter. While from the quay he gazed disconsolately at the yacht below, a voice at his elbow startled him by saying: "Pardon, sir, but you are English, *n'est ce pas?*" Turning sharply he found beside him a girl with an open book in her hand. With a dreadful suspicion of what was coming he gloomily admitted his nationality. "Then," she continued, "will you have the goodness to tell what these words wish to say?"—and she pointed out the words *background* and *vista*.

"What answer did you make?" we asked.

"What answer could I make?" he replied. "I certainly don't know the French for background, and I am not sure that I know exactly what *vista* means in English. It is ridiculous to put such words in a book intended for the instruction of French kids. I smiled my most winsome smile, pretended to hear a call, and bolted—what's the phrase in the dictionary?—*ventre à*

*terre*. Here I am and here I stay till I see the coast is clear."

But Antoinette, fortunately, was not rebuffed by the navigator's flight. Later in the morning she introduced herself to me and the steward. She proved to be a visitor from Blois, a dainty little lady of fifteen who looked younger than her years. She knew a little English and was most anxious to increase her knowledge. Without a trace of shyness she proposed that we should correct her English in return for her correction of our French. We were not seriously worried about the correctness of our French, but we were delighted to acquire an interpreter through whom we might accelerate the lagging work upon the yacht. Through her assistance we were able—in the steward's words—to talk to the men like Dutch Uncles.

Soon she and I became great chums. Her parents raised no objection to our intimacy. Why should they? Their daughter was receiving free lessons from a kind-hearted *professeur*. A brother sometimes acted as chaperon, but he knew not a word of English, and usually soon withdrew. We generally sat on the quay overlooking the yacht, frequently surrounded by an interested little group of fishermen and loafers. While I corrected her English, they listened stolidly; but when, with vivacity and emphatic gestures, she put right my hesitating French, and made me repeat a phrase or amend a barbarous pronunciation, they grinned broadly in huge delight. Little mademoiselle was bringing the elderly English monsieur to his proper bearings!

In addition to Antoinette and the guests in the hotel, other and humbler friends were made. Every day at 11 a.m. I took off whatever men—carpenters or riggers or blacksmiths—might be at work on the yacht to a neighbouring *buvette* for refreshment. It cost little

and was conducive to a good feeling which certainly did not delay repairs. There were always several smacks-men in the *buvette*. Every day I was called upon to tell the story of how the yacht was damaged and my arm hurt. Curiously, our damage was invariably attributed to a torpedo-boat. We never discovered what gave rise to this legend. It struck us that the French fishermen, like many of their English brethren, have a poor opinion of man-of-war seamanship. Each day I improved the story by words and phrases acquired from the audience of the previous day. At last I was able to produce quite a good yarn. I entered into the spirit of the thing and delivered it with proper emphasis and appropriate gesture. Madame behind the counter acted as chorus, and if, in the excitement of the moment, I forgot a point, she made it herself, with apologies for the interruption.

Most of the men had been to Penzance or Newlyn. The information that I had been to both these places seemed to put us all on a common footing and make us friends at once. With many a *bonne chance* we tossed off our liquor and returned to work. Madame was a very polite lady, but, relying upon my ignorance of the language, she often, for the amusement of her customers, made personal criticisms which, while mostly just, were certainly wounding to my vanity. "Monsieur is sadly slow; he has not the ear!" was one of the least disparaging of her remarks. One sometimes hears it said of an English town that every second house is a public-house. Of Camaret it is no exaggeration to say that along the front only one house in four is not a *buvette*. Yet we saw not a single case of drunkenness throughout the duration of our visit.

During our stay a wild beast show arrived. As everybody else went, we thought it our duty to go too.

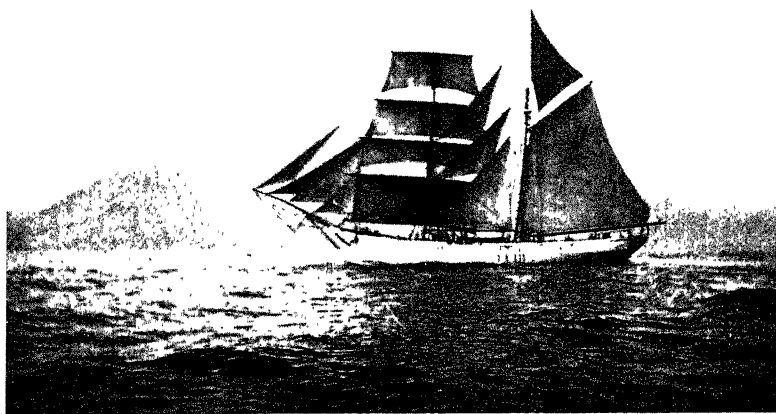
We were not unsophisticated enough to enjoy the performance. The spectators were interesting to watch, but the smell of humanity and of wild beasts—not many in number, but uncommonly strong in aroma—and the fear of fleas drove us speedily forth into the open air. During the show Camaret kept late hours. Usually by 10 p.m. everybody is safely tucked up in bed.

People who take pleasure in fancy bathing, *petits chevaux*, casinos and the amusements of places like Ostend or Trouville would be bored to tears at Camaret, and lose no time in beating a retreat. It is a place, rather, for visitors of refinement whose French is shaky and purses not over-burdened with gold. The former will be improved by a visit, and the latter not lightened alarmingly. Behind it, on the sea front, are several bays where one bathes off the beach ; there are rocks amid which the children scramble and gather shell-fish ; stretches of sand where they paddle and catch shrimps. The cliff scenery is quite fine and the sea-scapes beautiful. There is constant movement in the harbour of smacks arriving and departing, and constant passing of fishermen along the quays in sabots and clothing patched with artistic skill. And every evening, when dusk is nigh and the wind, maybe, has sunk to a drowsy breath, one may see from the tableland at the back of the village fleets of over-canvased sardine boats crowding in like homing birds to their night's resting-place. Sea-fishing is to be had. The roads about are fairly good, and bicycle trips are possible ; other trips can be made by *diligence* or hired conveyance. Brest is within reach. It is not a very interesting town, but the château is worthy of inspection. It has dungeons, oubliettes, and other horrors of the Middle Ages. From Brest a tram will take one to Conquet, whence a steam-boat runs to Ushant, the northern outpost of the Bay of

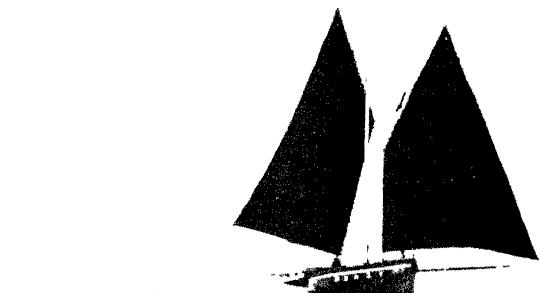


Biscay. But this trip is scarcely practicable within the limits of a day.

Our repairs were approaching completion. Guided by Antoinette we found shops where we were able to get mended the lamp of the spare binnacle, to purchase oil for its consumption, and a new wick and chimney for an old riding-light. We doubted whether we should ever have secured our needs without her aid. A dear child! Each of us had for Antoinette a warm corner in his heart.



Brigantine working out of Concubion Bay



A sardiner off Camaret.

## IV

### A WILD NIGHT IN THE CHOPS OF THE CHANNEL

23. They that go down to the sea in ships : and occupy their business in great waters ;

24. These men see the works of the Lord : and his wonders in the deep.

25. For at his word the stormy wind ariseth : which lifteth up the waters thereof.

26. They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep ; their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

27. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man ; and are at their wits' end.

PSALM CVII.

*Thursday, August 22.* Yacht ready at last ! The work had been done slowly, but done exceedingly well. With some anxiety we opened the bill. The charge for all repairs and a new sweep came to less than 200 francs—under £8. The builder refused to accept English money. Fortunately Céleste was willing to exchange our English gold for French notes. Camaret fishermen frequently visit English ports and find it convenient to have a certain amount of English money on board their smacks. She anticipated, therefore, little difficulty in re-exchanging the sovereigns she received from our hands.

Soon after noon, with wind W.N.W. and barometer 30.39, we shoved off from the quay. Antoinette, grieving at the loss of her elderly friends, was present with most of our late fellow-guests to bid us farewell and to wish us good luck. One little kiddie of five or six waved

her hand continuously, and repeatedly fired off all the English we had taught her. "Good morning, Sir!—good night!—sleep well!—good-bye!" To the fluttering of handkerchiefs and cries of "*Bon voyage!—au revoir!—à l'année prochaine!*" we set the mainsail and left Camaret for good.

Camaret is a delightful little place, but it is, evidently, not a spot in which to be caught in a gale with the wind anywhere between N. and N.E. Owing to shoal water a yacht cannot push far enough into the harbour to secure absolute shelter. Moreover, the available space in the harbour is usually very crowded. Still, I shall not hesitate to lie there again if ever opportunity offers. A violent gale from N.E. need not be expected every summer. We fancied that Camaret would regret our departure. We flattered ourselves that we had introduced into the quiet life of the place an element of interest and excitement hitherto unknown. We had overheard more than once the laughing remark: "*Ah! ces messieurs anglais, comme ils sont drôles!*"

Shortly after 2 p.m. we brought up at Brest in the far end of the Port de Commerce just ahead of several pilot-boats at moorings. The harbour was full of destroyers. We spent the afternoon in ridding our decks of the dirt picked up beside the quay at Camaret. Barometer in the evening 30.39.

*Friday, August 23.* We were now only waiting for a favourable chance to return to Falmouth. This day was hopeless. It blew hard from W.S.W. and the barometer, 30.18, was falling. Being, after all, at Brest, we visited the Douane. The officials made us purchase a yacht's passport, apparently because we were not furnished with a Bill of Health. Anyway, I can think of no other reason. Two years before, at this very port, I begged for a passport, and was unable to obtain one.

A yacht's passport is good for any French port, is valid for a year, and costs in the *Winnie's* case 1.20 francs. At Falmouth the French Consul's charge for his *visa* is 9s. 6d. There may be advantages in having a Bill of Health and the Consul's *visa*; it certainly seems much less expensive to cross without, and to take a passport at the French port first visited. Possibly I am mistaken; I confess to being a bit mystified. Barometer at night 30.02.

*Saturday, August 24.* It blew cruelly hard W.S.W. Barometer 29.7. It fell finer in the afternoon, and we managed to land. The steward purchased a bottle of whisky (Black and White) for seven francs. A little later he bought a second bottle of the same brand at another shop for 4.70 francs. His comments upon the honesty of the first vendor were—well, interesting! He purchased also a bottle of Elliman's Embrocation of the variety provided for the use of cattle. By the frequent application of this remedy he prophesied for my helpless arm a speedy restoration of its customary strength.

We had satisfied ourselves that no bones were broken. The arm grew slowly better, thanks to bathing and rubbing, but the shoulder was often very painful and both remained lamentably weak. No doctor was consulted. With difficulty are broken the ingrained habits of early youth. The son of a poor parson, I learnt as a boy to do without medical attention. The early acquired habit of avoiding a doctor lingers with me still. Moreover, my shoulder, whenever my mind was made up to invoke medical assistance, like the proverbial tooth which leaves off aching at the dentist's door, at once ceased to pain and appeared to mend fast. When, after my return home, urged by an anxious family, I did pay a visit to a doctor, I was informed that a splinter had

been knocked off the bone at the tip of the shoulder, that the splinter had duly joined again unassisted, that there was nothing to do except to massage the shoulder and neck for ten minutes night and morning. So "bang went saxpence"—and a trifle more!—which might just as well have brought in a more profitable return. The doctor declared, further, that my shoulder had come within an ace of being broken, and that he was quite unable to imagine why I had escaped *ostitis*, a painful inflammation of the membrane covering the bone, an infliction likely to have cost me my arm. It was not unpleasing to hear, now that the risk was past, of the gruesome fate so narrowly escaped. I felt as happy as the urchin who, convicted of a crime committed a term ago, cannot well now, on account of intervening time, be adequately punished for his iniquitous conduct. Barometer at night 29.74.

*Sunday, August 25.* A suspiciously bright morning with a faint S.E. draught. Tired of lying at Brest we decided to shift our quarters. Starting at 11 a.m. we spent the whole day in reaching the Anse de Fret just outside the mouth of the Châteaulin river, distant only four or five miles from the Port de Commerce. We had a considerable variety of weather—fog, rain, heat, calm, and occasionally light breaths of wind. We anchored at 5.30 p.m. off the village of Le Fret in a steady downpour. This bay is well sheltered from every wind except N.E., but is remarkably shallow. We lay a long distance from the shore, but had only three fathoms at low water underneath us. Le Fret is a mean little hamlet, situated on S. side of the presqu'île de Kelern. It enjoys a certain importance in being the place where, three times a day, a little steamboat from Brest lands passengers for Norgat and Camaret. The wealthy are rushed away in private motor-cars ; ordinary passengers

are bumped to their destinations in dilapidated *diligences*. At 10 p.m. barometer 29.59.

*Monday, August 26.* Barometer 29.52. It blew hard from S.W. with heavy showers all the morning. In the afternoon the wind was N.W. ; in the evening, again S.W. Barometer at night 29.64. Though the Châteaulin river was near and worthy of exploration, the weather was too bad to tempt us to move. We looked back with regret even on the unsatisfactory weather experienced during the yacht's detention at Camaret.

*Tuesday, August 27.* A dull, damp morning, wind light from different quarters, barometer 29.75. The wind came S. and the barometer dropped to 29.71. At noon the wind was N.E., light, and the barometer began to rise. At dusk the wind was N.W., barometer 29.86. It was full moon a few minutes before 8 p.m. We hoped that there might be some truth in the theory that the weather is affected by the phases of the moon, and that a change for the better might, possibly, be at hand. This lying about was, probably, beneficial to my arm, but very trying to men whose one object now was to bring to as speedy a conclusion as possible a most unsatisfactory cruise.

*Wednesday, August 28.* It was a dull, cloudy morning with a light S.S.W. wind. The barometer still stood at 29.86. The weather looked far from promising, but we determined to try for Falmouth, and by 6 a.m. were leaving Le Fret astern. In the Goulet we found the wind W. and the sea heavy. But the ebb tide shoved the yacht fast to windward, and Les Vieux Moines were passed at 9.30 a.m., an hour before low water, with the wind back again to S.S.W. At 11.30 a.m. the beacon on Les Plâtresses was abreast, and at 12.15 p.m. the Four lighthouse bore E.S.E., distant  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The barometer stood at 29.91, and the sun was trying to break through

the clouds. We took our departure, set the course N. by E. easterly, put the log overboard, and hoped for a quick passage and a continuance of the pleasant conditions which the day had so far afforded.

But our hopes were soon dissipated. The sun failed to force a passage through the enshrouding clouds, and there came, in consequence, a dull, cold afternoon. The wind grew steadily in strength and, being not quite directly aft, made steering a very difficult and exacting work, especially as a lumpy sea was found the moment we lost the shelter of the land. The difficulty of keeping a correct course was increased by the fact that our spare binnacle was not fitted with a spirit compass. The card flew about wildly enough to extract bad language from the mouth of a bishop. The barometer was soon falling with alarming rapidity. The Kay log proved to be out of order. At this we were not surprised. Somehow the fans of the rotator had been twisted, and, though we bent them back into what looked the correct curve, we could scarcely hope for absolute precision. In the first hour it registered only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles. We knew that the *Winnie* was doing at least six in the strong breeze that was blowing.

It was just the day for a square-sail. Unfortunately, ours had never been bent nor fitted with sheets. Had my arm not been incapacitated, all that was necessary could have been quickly accomplished. But, with only one working arm, I was not eager to tackle any job that was not absolutely necessary. We rejoiced in the fair wind and our rapid progress, but we could not fail to read aright the easily interpreted signs of coming heavy weather, suggested by the racing clouds, the growing sea, the falling barometer and the waxing fury of each successive squall. But we were not greatly cast down at the certain approach of an inevitable dusting. This time



we had plenty of sea-room, and, unhampered by rocks, mud-banks or neighbours, we calmly awaited the arrival of any affliction our ill luck might have still up its sleeve to bestow.

We let the yacht run on till 5 p.m. under whole canvas. Then, as the sea had become decidedly heavy, and the wind was very strong and growing rapidly stronger, we stowed mizen and jib and tied down two reefs in the mainsail. With the probability of a spell of lying-to before us, we tied down a reef in the staysail as well. Under reduced canvas the boat was much easier to steer. It was pleasing to find that the heavy following sea caused her no trouble. We had looked forward, with curiosity and some anxiety, to learn how she would behave under the conditions now prevailing.

All the afternoon the helmsman's chief anxiety was the danger of a sudden gybe. Had the direction of the wind and the run of the sea been a point more southerly, the yacht would have run more easily. With the wind a point on the quarter she sheered about with disconcerting waywardness. At 8 p.m., while in my charge, she suddenly gybed all standing. She took an unexpected sheer to starboard, and, before it could be met with the helm, the sail came over with a terrifying crash. Had my arm not been crippled, I might possibly have eased the shock by hanging on to a bight of the main sheet. As it was, I dared neither to let go the tiller with my right hand nor grab the sheet with my left. The shell of the block on the traveller was badly split ; apart from this, no damage could be found. In anticipation of a possible gybe the boom had not been slacked off far enough to hit the runner. The block still worked, but we put a stout rope round the boom to act as a subsidiary sheet in case the block gave out altogether.

Somewhat unwillingly I was persuaded to heave to.

To waste a fair wind is an unpardonable sin. On the other hand, to run on in the dark, in a gale of wind, with a compass card that never for an instant checked its rapid gyration, was only to court trouble that might end in a disaster. We brought the yacht to the wind on the starboard tack. With the staysail reefed and hauled not quite taut to windward, the boat lay beautifully. Now and again the mainsail gave a violent shiver, but not often. We had secured a perfect balance.

We spent an awful night. I have often wondered how King David was able to write his vivid description of a gale, and of the relief of the crew when the gale has blown itself out. There is nothing in Holy Writ to lead a reader to suppose that he had ever ventured forth far upon the waters. Yet his words read like the words of a man who has seen what he is describing. Among his followers in the Cave of Adullam must have been a runaway sailor who soothed some of the king's anxious hours by narrating adventures that had befallen himself on the bosom of the Mediterranean.

The barometer continued its downward course. Heavy rain came. The drops were blown along with such violence that they stung the face like hailstones. It blew terribly hard, even, perhaps, harder than it had blown in either L'Aberwrach or Camaret. The seas became very big, with nasty curling crests whose breaking whiteness could be distinguished in the surrounding gloom. Now and again one of these crests shot over our deck forward, otherwise the yacht rode very dry. The wind was warm, and, though, of course, no moon was visible, the night was not inky black.

We kept watches, two hours each at a time, to report instantly any mischance to our sails, and to show a light, if necessary, to a passing vessel. It was not really unpleasant on deck—much pleasanter there, in

fact, than below. Our side-lights had been blown out before they could be shipped in the rigging. In the cockpit we kept a lighted lamp which, while an excellent lamp in the matter of light, was endowed with a surprising power of producing a stink. The cabin was, of course, battened down save for the doors into the cockpit. The stink from this lamp poured into the cabin and made a veritable Black Hole of what would otherwise have been not uncomfortable quarters.

*Thursday, August 29.* At midnight there was no improvement in the weather ; rather the reverse. Barometer 29.56. At 3 a.m. we had a fearful squall. The wind shrieked and moaned and howled. One might have thought that myriads of tormented spirits had escaped out of hell, and were clinging to the rigging to expiate their sins. I was below and waited to hear the navigator inform us that the staysail was blown away or the mainsail split. Providentially we were spared any such misfortune. After a while the squall lulled a little, and the barometer began to rise.

At 3.45 a.m. the wind ceased with dramatic abruptness.

We were inclined to regard the sudden calm with distrust rather than with satisfaction. There occurred to our minds the old barometrical saw :

First rise after low  
Foretells stronger blow.

We feared that this unexpected cessation of wind was but the prelude to a yet stronger blow from another quarter, probably N.W. But minutes passed and no wind came. When I took charge at 4 a.m. there was but a faint W.S.W. breeze. It was impossible to put the yacht on her course because, owing to condensation on the inside of the binnacle glass, the compass card was entirely obscured. The glass was a fixture, and, without

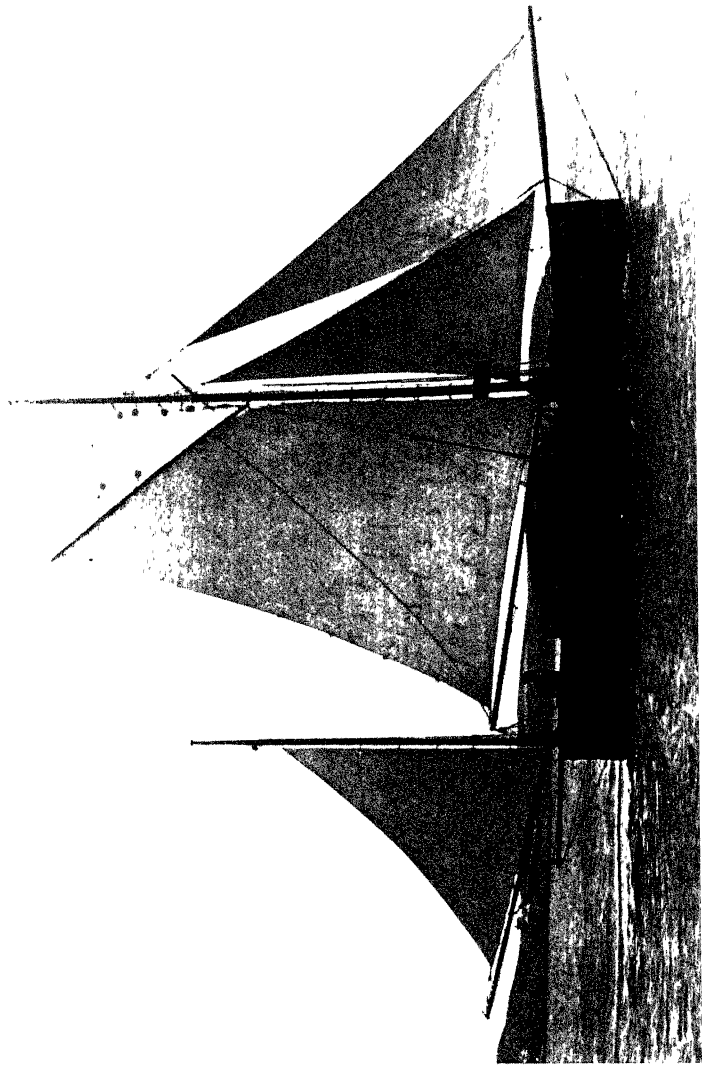
unscrewing the binnacle from its base, we saw no way to reach the screen of moisture. The binnacle lamp was refilled and lighted, and by 5 a.m. the incrustation had evaporated sufficiently to allow the card to be read. There being then no signs of a fresh blow the yacht was headed once more N. by E.

At 6.45 a.m. the barometer had risen to 29.59. As the weather was obviously going to be fine, at any rate for an hour or two, we set all lower canvas. At 7.45 a.m. the navigator got an observation for longitude. All the morning we ran on in bright sunshine with a growing W.S.W. wind. After the meridian observation, so far as could be calculated without exact knowledge of the run of the yacht, or, owing to unsteadiness of compass, of the course actually steered, our position was found to be  $49^{\circ} 44' 30''$  N. and  $4^{\circ} 55' 0''$  W. From that point to the Lizard the course is N. by E., what had, nominally, been steered throughout the whole run. But none of us felt at all confident that this position was correct, though by the light of latter events we discovered that it was, if not absolutely correct, very little at fault. We thought that all yesterday the yacht had been running W. of her true course. Most of the time of our lying-to the tide had been setting westward. In any case, there was no need to bring the Lizard closely on board. We put the yacht's head N.N.E. and ran on without any doubt of fetching the Manacles or St. Anthony's point. Barometer at noon, 29.58.

At 2 p.m. we sighted, some miles to windward, land broad on our port bow. Unfortunately the thick fog that shrouded its upper part rendered identification impossible. Soon fog swept down and completely hid our recent discovery. We thought that much of what we had seen was land W. of the Lizard. We know

The *Hinne*, with wind abeam.

[To face page 136,



now that it was Black Head and the land stretching away to the Lizard. Even as it was, the course N.N.E. would have brought us to the neighbourhood of Falmouth but for the spring tide which was sweeping the yacht eastward. When, at last, we made the land, we made the Dodman. At the first sight of its outline through the fog we thought it must be Zoze point, and, reaching in, expected every moment to see the white gleam of St. Anthony's lighthouse peeping out from behind. But no ! when we drew in closer, we found we were off the Dodman. There is no mistaking his blunt nose, with the cross on the summit of his brow. Somewhat disconcerted, we made a fair wind and ran on for Fowey, where we brought up at 6 p.m. off Polruan. Barometer at dusk, 29.61.

*Friday, August 30.* We remained at Fowey. The steward went off by train to visit friends. He returned looking quite pale. We were relieved to find his pallid hue due to nothing worse than a hot bath.

*Saturday, August 31.* A pleasant but chilly sail to Falmouth gave a prosaic ending to an eventful trip. Shy and shamefaced, we brought the battered *Winnie* to her usual anchorage. A month ago we had set forth in high hopes and exuberant spirits to sail away to distant Cadiz ; now we were back with nothing of our intention accomplished, and filled only with a burning desire to hide from the scrutiny of passing craft.

How like a younker or a prodigal  
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,  
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind !  
How like a prodigal doth she return,  
With overweather'd ribs and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind !\*

Among my many cruises this one holds a painful pre-eminence in being by far the worst of all in every

\* Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, II., 6.

aspect—weather experienced, distance traversed, mishaps encountered, dangers incurred. And yet, now that the yacht and ourselves are safely back, I do not know that I would have had things otherwise. The trip, short as it was, has left more to look back upon than a dozen commonplace cruises. Never, so long as we live, will any of us forget the early hours of August 13, when we lay huddled together on the deck of the smack, expecting to find ourselves, within no long time, violently dashed upon the cliffs, or battling desperately to escape their forbidding front. Unfading, too, will be the recollection of our lying-to in mid-channel, when it seemed that our canvas must succumb to the fury of the howling blasts, and the yacht fall a helpless prey to the voracious seas. Past troubles are a present joy. Many bad moments were ours, but, in our worst, the cheerful words of Aeneas never failed to shed a gleam of comfort :

Revocate animos maestumque dolorem  
Mittite ; forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit.\*

\* Vergil, Aen. I., 202. Come, call your spirits back, and banish these doleful fears—who knows but some day this too will be remembered with pleasure ?—*Conington's Translation.*

ACROSS THE BAY



# ACROSS THE BAY

1921

## I

### VEXATION AND GRATIFICATION

So we steered her, pulley haul,  
Out, across the bay.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

THE man who can think of no further improvement to make in his boat must be nearly as unhappy as Alexander the Great when he wept because there were no more worlds left for him to conquer. Scarcely a year has passed since the *Winnie* came into my possession without some alteration being carried out, below or aloft, to increase comfort or to lessen labour.

Of these alterations the most important was made after the 1912 cruise. The cabin-head and cockpit were narrowed by nearly three feet, and a longitudinal beam run, on either side, from the transom to the main beam. This alteration, while it did not diminish, appreciably, the roominess of the cabin, strengthened the boat structurally, gave sufficient room to carry the dinghy on deck, and largely improved the defences of the cockpit. A bulkhead, at the same time, was built up between the cockpit and the cabin, and entrance given to the latter by a sliding-hatch and a companion ladder. Henceforward, the binnacle was carried in its natural place, at the fore end of the cockpit. These

changes not only enhanced the appearance, but also vastly increased the seaworthiness of the boat.

In August, 1920, my good friend C. F. Duncan, the navigator of many a cruise made in the *Winnie*, setting forth from Brest, crossed the Bay of Biscay in his six ton cutter *Sirius* and made the port of St. Martin, a few miles W. of Santander; thence, visiting every possible harbour on the way, he coasted along as far as Coruña, where he left the boat till August should come round again.

Provided that a mate could be found to help in bringing the *Winnie* back, I willingly undertook to convey him and his crew to Coruña that he might continue, in 1921, the exploration of the Spanish Coast so auspiciously begun the previous year. To discover a mate with sufficient time and nerve to undertake so long a trip demanded industrious research, but eventually, thanks to the introduction of the Cruising Association, J. E. Fife was raked in from the wilds of North Devon. He proved to be a find of inestimable value.

On her return from a trip to Brittany the *Winnie* awaited at Falmouth the arrival of her crew. Stores were replenished, the water-tank filled, the stem-band repaired and a leaky seam in the starboard quarter effectively recaulked. The fine weather of June and July broke, and rain and wind replaced the sunshine and balmy breezes of the earlier part of the summer. It is an unfortunate peculiarity of August, for many a cruiser the only month of leisure, to give, between the settled weather of July and September, an interlude of blustering unpleasantness.

*Thursday, July 28.* This day, appointed for the assembling of the crew, was excessively dirty from a moist morning to an even moister night. A strong wind blowing from S.E. made landing at Jakkett's yard both

wet and difficult. At 6.30 p.m. Duncan arrived. In the middle of our tea Fife appeared. An officer in the Indian Police, home on leave, he was, at length, able to gratify a long frustrated desire to range the seas, and had grasped with both hands the offer of a berth on the *Winnie* to adventure forth to Spain. A big man he was and heavy. Double lanyards had been fitted to his cot to support his sixteen stone. No lean and hungry-looking Cassius, he was a lively proof of the wisdom of Cæsar's wish :

Let me have men about me that are fat,  
Sleek-headed men and such as sleep at nights.

Good-tempered and willing, he won at once his way to the hearts, not only of his fellow voyagers, but also of every one with whom we had dealings at all our ports of call.

The evening was spent in stowing the provisions required for immediate use, and in packing away and making secure the various cases that, for the present, were left unopened. Duncan's chronometer, allowed to run down for the railway journey, refused, with sullen obstinacy, to start its career anew. A chronometer is an instrument of too delicate a mechanism to be treated rashly by inexperienced hands. We easily resisted a temptation to try upon the rigidity of its works the emollient virtue of butter, even the best butter, the prescription of an eminent authority on the treatment of recalcitrant watches. The wind lulled at nightfall and worked round to S. Barometer 29.8.

*Friday, July 29.* We were scarcely in bed before the wind piped up with unexpected and inopportune vehemence. The nearness of several craft, lying to moorings astern, prevented the slacking away of all the chain that was desirable. But, as the wind was off-shore

and the water smooth under the lee of the town, we went to sleep untroubled by the slightest feeling of anxiety. But at 2.30 a.m. a noise outside, on a level with my recumbent ear, sent me flying to the deck from my cot in the fo'c'sle. The yacht was sheering about wildly in close proximity to the side of a steamboat.

In the pitch blackness of a gloomy morning we were, for a brief space, quite unable to recognize the spot to which the yacht had driven. But recognition was not long in coming. The wind had flown to N.W. and was blowing with spiteful energy. The yacht had dragged, or tripped, her anchor, and was now endeavouring, with insensate activity, to ram the *Queen of the Fal*, a lumpy tug-boat fast to moorings almost abreast of the town pier. Our antagonist was so big that, with all speed, we withdrew from the unequal combat. Making the end of a warp fast to the tug, we slacked away chain handsomely, till the yacht was lying some distance astern and clear of her opponent. Even if the anchor was foul and failed to hold with its extra length of chain, further dragging would be stopped by the check of the warp. Our ladder, incautiously left hanging over the side, had been smashed to little pieces against the tug's unyielding plates. Otherwise, so far as could be ascertained in the dark, no damage had been sustained. Our loss was replaced by a rope-ladder drawn from Jackett's unfailing stores.

Turning out at 8 a.m. we found her crew in the act of boarding the tug. Her skipper fired off volleys of clamorous complaint. We had broken a scupper-plate, had damaged his rail, and carried away a lot of his paint. As we had not been lying to two anchors, we were entirely in the wrong with never a leg to stand upon. His ship's damage must certainly be made good. A soft answer turneth away wrath, but whether no answer at all is

calculated to soften asperity may be left as a question of honest doubt. Anyway, not a word was spoken in reply. We might well have pointed out that the damage complained of was far above the reach of the *Winnie's* rail, and that, if we had broken the strict letter of the law in riding to a single anchor, he had broken the law much more flagrantly himself in failing to secure the undisturbed occupancy of his berth by showing on his fore-stay the customary riding-light. These points were reserved to be sprung upon him should the necessity arise. But the skipper was, evidently, a dear old blowhard whose bark was worse than his bite, for no attempt was made to mulct us in cash, nor was anything more heard of the damage we were accused of inflicting.

When, on the departure of the steamboat, the warp was slipped, we found that the anchor was gallantly holding. After the lapse of a few hours we learnt the reason of its stubborn grip. It blew hard all the morning. Barometer 30.1. About noon Duncan, anxious to have the indiscipline of the chronometer corrected, risked with Fife a swamping in the pram, and gained, without accident, the shelter of the pier. When the watchmaker's shop was reached, the chronometer was found to be going. Either the tossing about of a tempestuous night, or the shaking experienced on the walk to the shop, had restored to the sinner a penitent sense of neglected duty.

In the afternoon we procured from the Custom House two bills of health, one for France in case of need, another for Spain. The *visa* of the French vice-consul was obtained by the payment of a small fee, but the Spanish consul, though he demanded no fee, raised an astonishing difficulty. He refused to affix his *visa* to the paper till we produced a certificate from the port doctor of the yacht's freedom from rats! His

gravity of bearing was in no way suggestive of playfulness, but the required certificate struck us as being so absurd that, for a moment, we suspected an attempt to perpetrate upon our innocence a jovial pleasantry. But it was soon discovered that he meant every word of what he said. In vain Duncan insisted that the previous year in no port in Spain had such a certificate been alluded to, much less demanded. The consul refused to proceed in the matter till the doctor's certificate had been got and placed in his hands.

With minds filled with a combination of amusement and irritation, we hurried on board to shift the yacht into quarters further removed from the berth of the steamboat. The wind had lulled to a wholesail breeze, and the *Queen of the Fal* was out of the way, towing a schooner to Fowey to be loaded with clay. We hove short, set the mainsail, and attempted to weigh the anchor. Soon the nearness of the tug's boat, left hanging to the buoy, raised an uneasy suspicion in our minds that we were foul of the mooring-chain. A few moments' heaving on the windlass turned vague suspicion into dismal certainty. Light moorings in shoal water can, usually, be lifted, and secured till the anchor is cleared. Here the water was deep and the chain, big and heavy, resisted all our efforts to bring it within sight and reach.

The whole of Jackett's staff was called out to our assistance. Every known device for freeing an anchor foul of a mooring was, in turn, vainly employed. An opinion soon gained ground that a fluke of the anchor had passed through a link in the chain ; in which case it was lost till, at some indefinite time, the chain was laboriously raised for the examination of its state. The men went off at last to their evening meal. We took off the kedge, and hauled the yacht as far away as was possible from

the steamboat's reach. Very despondently we sat down to tea, and discussed which was the less unpleasant of the only two possible alternatives, the employment of a diver, or the loss of the anchor.

In the middle of the discussion Duncan's mate, A. Russell, made his appearance. The Attorney-General of a British Dependency, the new-comer was, naturally, entitled the A.G. He proved to be a man of cheerful spirit, endowed with an unfailing fund of quaint stories and amusing anecdotes, which did much to lighten the tedium of our compulsory lingering at Falmouth. The *Winnie's* crew was now complete.

At 10 p.m. the *Queen of the Fal* returned to her moorings. "Pretty near, mister!" a voice remarked from her deck.

"Foul of your cursed moorings!" was my short rejoinder.

"Then you've picked up something you'll find heavy enough to hold you!" retorted the skipper, in a tone of jubilant satisfaction. No doubt he thought that the intrusion upon the decent privacy of his charge had been met with an appropriate punishment. How warm his sympathy with the Mikado in his song!

My object, all sublime,  
I shall achieve in time,  
To make the penalty fit the crime,  
The penalty fit the crime.

It was abundantly clear that, though he had no hand in its production, our misfortune afforded him a brimming cup of innocent merriment. Wind in the evening N.W. Barometer 30.4.

*Saturday, July 30.* Wind S.S.E. Barometer 30.4. While the others were ashore shopping, a further effort was made, with the help of Jackett's men, to extricate the

anchor from the toils of its inflexible snare. Our efforts were as unsuccessful this morning as they had been yesterday evening. The employment of a diver was too expensive to be contemplated : it cost more than the value of many anchors. Consequently, in the end, a reluctant consent was given to the cutting away of the cable. In a few moments three fathoms of chain and a beautiful anchor were lying abandoned on the bottom of the harbour.

The yacht was moored, temporarily, to her kedge and to a 28lb. anchor borrowed from the yard. What troubled me, even more than the loss of the anchor, was the fear that Falmouth might be unable to provide an adequate substitute. But from a marine store dealer, Jackett's man, George, was luckily able to purchase for 25s. a 72lb. anchor, the only one of suitable weight to be found, at the moment, within the circuit of the town. It was of clumsy build, with the bluntest of palms, but had a nice long shank, and proved entirely effective in use.

The purchase was hardly completed when a fisherman entered the shop also in search of an anchor. Like ourselves, he had dragged in the late breeze, and, fouling the moorings of a coal hulk, had lost both his anchors. While he had our profoundest sympathy, we rejoiced exceedingly at our representative's prior arrival on the scene. Fife opined that the unfortunate fisherman's feelings at being so closely forestalled must have resembled those of Old Mother Hubbard on a memorable occasion. Asked to explain, he startled us with an unexpected version of one of the most ancient of rhymes :

Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard  
For something to cure her thirst ;  
When she got there, the cupboard was bare—  
Her husband had been there first !



In the course of the morning Duncan interviewed the port doctor, and arranged with him for the inspection of the yacht. He was brought off at midday. His inspection was, naturally, of a most perfunctory character. Our word was accepted that we were untroubled with rats. Who, indeed, except possibly a sufferer from D.T., has ever seen a rat upon a small yacht? He gave the certificate without hesitation, but charged us a guinea for his trouble. No doubt it was the usual fee, but we resented the heavy cost of an unnecessary document. Armed with it we again visited the Spanish consul, and gained our papers without further objection. In the evening we dined at the Green Bank Hotel. The weather had been fine all day, but, as we returned from the hotel, rain began to fall, and the sky looked overcharged with wet. Barometer 30.35.

*Sunday, July 31.* Wind light S.W. Barometer 30.35. The iron band at the end of the bowsprit was discovered to be adrift, evidently through contact with the side of the steamboat. Its readjustment was necessary before we started for Spain. The A.G. took train to visit friends at Plymouth. The afternoon was damp and foggy. Wind W. Barometer 30.01.

*Monday, August 1.* Wind light S.W. Barometer 30.35. The band on the bowsprit end was made secure, and the A.G. was on board again before noon. There was nothing now to delay further our setting forth, except the direction of the wind and the state of the weather. A blustering S.W. wind—of all winds the least suited to our purpose—and a sky heavy with saturating mist, offered to voyagers bound across the Bay little prospect of a successful passage. But at 3 p.m. we weighed our anchors with the intention of beating across to Helford. The short trip would be an object lesson, enable the fresh members to recognize sheets and halyards, and

initiate them, to some extent, in the working of the ship. By 5 p.m. we were inside the river, but, owing to the ebb tide and flawing wind, it was 6 p.m. before the yacht was moored in a good berth close to the *Tern*.

In the evening Fife was landed to visit Cooper, the owner of the *Tern*, with whom, earlier in the season, he had cruised to the Channel Islands and along the coast of France. Duncan and the A.G. rowed up the creek to Port Navas in search of eggs, and of a big frying-pan. The yacht's frying-pan, an indispensable utensil for indifferent cooks, had been ruined by the too strenuous application of Monkey Brand soap. It shone with the brightness of new silver, but a hole in its bottom spoiled it for further use. Their quest was successful. They returned with three dozen beautiful eggs and a gigantic frying-pan, which they had induced a provident housewife to part with, but on extravagant terms. Fife was put on board by Cooper, who invited the whole crew to lunch with him on the morrow, unless an unexpected change in the weather enabled us to start upon our voyage. At bedtime the sky looked depressingly bad. Barometer 30.27.

*Tuesday, August 2.* Wind W. by S. Barometer 30.01. *Ianthe II.* was lying near, recently returned from a prolonged cruise up and down the shores of Brittany. The morning was spent in the interchange of visits. With prodigal hospitality, Cooper carried off to lunch the crews of both yachts, six stalwart men of healthy appetite and inappeasable thirst. His house, standing on the slope of the hill overlooking the river, enjoys a glorious view of shimmering water and of bosky country. While we chatted together after lunch, the wind abated something of its strength, and worked round to N. of W. Hastily bidding farewell to our generous entertainer, we

hurried on board to take advantage of improved conditions.

*Ianthe II.* was away first, bound for Falmouth. By 4.15 p.m. the *Winnie* was under way, with dinghy lashed on deck, two reefs in the mainsail, and everything securely fast below to face the rough and tumble expected outside the river. The sun shone brightly, but the wind was still needlessly strong, and the further we ran, the nearer it drew to W. We felt no overwhelming confidence that a few hours would not witness our shamefaced return. The Manacles buoy was passed at 5.20 p.m. and, at 7.35 p.m., when the Lizard bore W.N.W., distant six miles, we took our departure, and steered the yacht S.S.W. It was our intention to catch a glimpse of Ushant, the solitary sign-post on the direct road to Spain.

For a couple of hours the wind remained sufficiently free to allow the yacht to run the course with her sheets slightly eased. Thereafter, it breezed up with steady persistence, and drew so far ahead, that, only by pinning in the sheets to the last inch, were we able to maintain our course. The sea was heavy and the perniciousness of life below soon made distressing calls upon our fortitude. Sea-sickness was rife. The sleepers in the fo'c'sle, Duncan and myself, experienced a time of insufferable misery. With the hatch battened down, the air was stifling: with the hatch slightly open, we were deluged with salt water. How bitterly we regretted the considerateness which had induced us to surrender to our less hardened friends the undamped airiness of the roomy saloon!

*Wednesday, August 3.* At midnight the yacht, at her best, was heading only S. by W. It was blowing very hard. At 1.30 a.m. we were compelled to give up the struggle, and to lay the yacht to for a while. When

the night was almost at odds with morning, the sky wore a curiously stormy and ominous look.

A shivering streak of light,  
A scurry of rain ;  
Bleak day from bleaker night  
Creeps pinched and fain ;  
The old gloom thins and dies,  
And in the wretched skies  
A new gloom, sick to rise,  
Sprawls like a thing in pain.

W. E. HENLEY.

At 6.30 a.m., as the wind was, by then, S.W., and showed no tendency to lull, we reluctantly decided to run back to shelter. Barometer 30.29.

Vicious squalls of wind and rain chased us as we fled for refuge. At 8 a.m. the Lizard was in sight, but it was noon before the Manacles were abreast. We rounded the buoy, and hauled our wind with the intention of sheltering in Helford river, but, discovering a big rent in the clew of the staysail, we bore away again and ran to Falmouth to get the damage repaired. As soon as the anchor was down, the sail was unbent and conveyed to the loft of Mr. Prior, who promised to have it ready by the following morning. In the afternoon, by dodging showers, the persons most interested succeeded in drying the bedding of the fo'c'sle cots. We all felt the reaction that often follows an unsuccessful effort, and were inclined to attribute to mean-spirited weakness our disinclination to prolong further a losing struggle. Dissatisfaction, however, failed to affect the soundness of our sleep. Barometer 30.39.

*Thursday, August 4.* Wind W. by N., but soon shifted to S.S.W. Barometer 30.48. We recovered the staysail neatly repaired, and bent it immediately ready for use. Our haste was fruitless. A day of wind and wet detained the yacht at anchor and her crew on board. Barometer at night, 30.44.

*Friday, August 5.* Wind S.W. Barometer 30.38. A thoroughly dirty day. In the afternoon the kedge was taken away to enable us to haul the yacht clear of a disused mooring-buoy which, with the naughty petulance of a troublesome child, she endeavoured to decorate with paint wantonly scraped from her black-coated side. The crew, in the afternoon, walked to Mylor creek, and regained the shelter of the yard at 6 p.m. at the moment when a burst of heavy rain began its descent. They were much cheered by a conversation with a sanguine yachting hand who declared, with overlavish emphasis, that a streaming downpour was the one thing needful to knock the bottom out of the weather, and bring back to disconsolate mortals the departed summer. With unabashed confidence he predicted a N.W. wind for the morrow, and promised the accomplishment of various difficult feats, if his words turned out to be merely the idle vapourings of a discredited prophet.

We gloomily hoped that the man might be right in his forecast, and that the wild night which followed would prove to be the climax of unsatisfactory weather. Barometer 30.2. Our detention was fast ruining Duncan's cruise in the *Sirius*. For his sake I regretted my undertaking, and advised him to set about the discovery of some more prosaic, but less uncertain, method of reaching his own boat than by working in the *Winnie* his passage to Spain.

*Saturday, August 6.* In the early morning the rain ceased and the howling blasts subsided into calm. At 8 a.m. the prophecy of the yacht hand was unexpectedly fulfilled, and it was unfortunate for him that he was not at hand to enjoy the unstinted beer which, in acknowledgment of his happy vaticination, the *Winnie* was prepared to provide. A light W.N.W.

wind began to blow. Barometer 30.28. With some hesitation, we decided to make a further attempt. The fine weather of the moment held out little promise of continuance, but the time already wasted forbade the neglect of the smallest opportunity to sail.

As a preliminary step to getting under way, I under-ran the warp and tried from the pram to uproot the kedge. It remained immovable, and it was only with the help of the boat and man from the Mission to Seamen ketch, Jackett's George, who happened to be passing, and the weight of Fife, that it was, after a mighty effort, dragged free from a retentive patch of the stiffest mud. For several moments it was supposed that we had picked up some forgotten moorings. The supposition, combined with the memory of the unfortunate experience of the previous week, stirred up the angry passions of our hearts, and evoked a flow of language that was eminently unsuited for the ears of a Sunday-school class.

At 10 a.m., under all lower canvas, the yacht rounded the piers. The wind, still W.N.W., was strong. The Manacles buoy was abeam at 11.5 a.m. At 0.15 p.m. we streamed the log and took our departure, the Lizard bearing W.N.W., distant eight miles. The wind, a good breeze W., allowed the yacht to head just comfortably her course, S.S.W. We were on too close a pinch to be unduly sanguine about our coming luck. At 6 p.m., log 28 miles, we laid the yacht to, the better to enjoy our tea. The preparation of the meal upset the stability of my stomach. Indeed, Duncan was the only man who showed a hearty appetite. To the victim of qualminess nothing is more provocative of resentment than the sight of a comrade who is thoroughly enjoying his food.

At 6.50 p.m., letting the staysail draw, we proceeded

on our course. As the hour of darkness approached, the sky to windward, heavily banked with clouds, filled our breasts with grave suspicion, and a pair of reefs was tied down in the mainsail. At 11 p.m. Fife sighted on the sky the reflection of the Crac'h light, bearing S. by W., and distant not less than 40 miles. The yacht's head was still kept as near S.S.W. as the wind allowed. If circumstances proved favourable, it was roughly the road to the N.W. corner of Spain; if the threat of a S.W. wind was fulfilled, the further we hung to windward, the better for any plan we might be compelled to adopt.

*Sunday, August 7.* The wind drew gradually more and more ahead. At 3 a.m., log 60, the wind fell so light that our pace was too slow to keep the log-wheel working. At 8 a.m., barometer 30.4, log 70, the wind was S.W., and the yacht, heading S., had Ushant, ten miles away, just open of the starboard bow. Since the direction of the wind, absolutely adverse, killed every hope of instant advance in the direction of Spain, we determined to pass up the Iroise, and await at Camaret the arrival of a less unfavourable breeze.

The reefs had been shaken out, but the wind remained very light, and a strong tide checked our headway. At 0.30 p.m., having made the island abreast of Stiff point, we tacked the yacht and, helped by the last of a furious stream, rounded Crac'h lighthouse, passing through a terrifying confusion of breaking seas. A glance at the chart removed all anxiety on the question of water. The turmoil was purely tidal, and, though startling to look at, quite harmless in action. After a couple of boards Jumont lighthouse was weathered, with only a small balance of room to our credit. Thence we hoped to fetch, without further beating, straight

through the Iroise, the big-ship, reef-edged channel that leads up to the Brest estuary.

A stronger wind blew away a hint of low-lying mist, and the sun shone out warmly from a cloudless sky. A clear view was granted of all the features of the S. side of the grim island. Exactly ten years before, Duncan and I, in the *Senorita*, had passed up the Iroise on our way to Brest, and, in spite of a poignant sense of frustrated hope, we were not ill pleased to refresh our memories by a second view of Ushant's forbidding coast. Early in the afternoon the lighthouse on the Pierres Noires was picked up ahead, but it was 6 p.m. before the reef was left astern, and we were running E.S.E. for Toulinguet point. In the evening the sky clouded over and dropped a sprinkle of rain. At 9.15 p.m. Camaret was reached and the yacht brought to an anchor off the life-boat causeway. The wind was then W. and the barometer 30.42.

*Monday, August 8.* A light N. wind mightily gladdened our spirits. Barometer 30.52. Our start was postponed till noon to take the first of the favourable tide through the Toulinguet passage. Meanwhile the A.G. and myself hurried ashore to purchase a further supply of bread. Calling at the Hôtel de France, I restored a cardboard box, borrowed from Céleste earlier in the summer to convey potatoes on board, and, unintentionally, carried off on our departure for England. My old friend was not visible, the *cuisinière*—another acquaintance of long standing—was, no doubt, busily engaged in the kitchen, and Mademoiselle—a new importation who, naturally, was unacquainted with the foreign clientèle of the establishment—was occupied in preparing the tables for *déjeuner*. Our reception struck me as being undeservedly chilly. Perhaps a



second visit the same year was too great a strain on the conventions of effusive politeness.

But the chilliness, imaginary or real, was speedily forgotten in the bustle of starting. Somewhat before noon the yacht was under way, not to anchor again, we hoped, before our arrival in Spain. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." It, undoubtedly, does in the breast of a cruiser. At 1.10 p.m., rounding the Louve beacon, we entered the passage that separates Toulinguet rocks from the mainland. The wind, at the moment, was strong, and showed a decided inclination to draw well ahead. Our photographers took several snapshots of the Toulinguet rocks. None of the photographs turned out particularly good, but the rocks form a picturesque and remarkable cluster. The Toulinguet passage gives a first impression of straitness, but it is wide enough to be worked through, and may be taken, by day or night, without the smallest hesitation. The Tas de Pois, a row of slender pinnacles that lift lofty heads above the surface of deep water, make a conspicuous addition to the striking scenery of this rocky coast.

As soon as we had passed the outermost rock of the Tas de Pois, the yacht's head was put S.W. for Trevennic island. The day was warm and bright. The wind, now N.W., while showing a fitful disposition, blew, on the whole, an adequate breeze. An air of cheerfulness pervaded the yacht, for the feeling gained ground that, after exasperating delays, we had, at last, really started upon the hazardous enterprise. On a S.W. bearing the yacht was found to be coming out N.W. of Trevennic island, and a doubt concerning an error in the compass, raised already in an earlier cruise, was once more revived. Challenged to prove his supposition by a sun azimuth, Duncan declared that, though the calculation could be easily made, yet, since the compass was not fitted with

sight-vanes, the bearing of the sun could not be observed with helpful exactness. However, from a bearing taken of the lighthouses on Trevennic and the Ile de Sein in line, he gathered that, on a S.W. by S. course, the compass had an error of three-quarters of a point of E. deviation.

We were now approaching a passage to the evil reputation of which reference has been made in an earlier cruise. In bad weather, the passage, probably, presents all the difficulties hinted at in the directions; in fine weather, with a fair tide, a stranger will find nothing whatever to cause undue apprehension. Familiarity has bred in my heart a slight feeling of disrespect, but it must be admitted that, on every occasion of her passing through the Raz, the *Winnie* has had the advantage of the finest weather.

The stream was running N. when we passed Trevennic island, and we knew that there was no possibility of forcing a way through till the impetuous tide gave way to slack water. By using the eddy that sweeps across the wide mouth of the Baie des Trépassés we reached, by 5 p.m., almost as far as the Plate rock, in the close company of several smacks and a couple of coasters. Thus far, and no farther, the tide suffered our advance. The wind had fallen very light. Losing the eddy and caught by the full force of the tide, we were all whisked helplessly back to the N. end of the Raz. In a few moments the gain of several hours was lost. Entering the eddy once more, the whole fleet was carried quietly on, and, by 7 p.m., was bunched together at the very same point it had previously reached. Half an hour later, thanks to weakening current and a light puff of wind, we all made our escape to the untrammelled freedom of the open sea.

Our late fellow prisoners in the bondage of the Raz went off in the direction of Audierne; with good heart

we headed the yacht away from the land on a S.W. by S. bearing. If the compass had developed an error of a point of E. deviation, this course would bring her to Cape Ortugal, a convenient landfall for a vessel bound for Coruña. We felt that, at length, the die was really cast, and that there was only left for us the lot of the stout-hearted adventurer who

Grasps the skirts of happy chance  
And breasts the blows of circumstance.

TENNYSON.

Till 9 p.m. we had a period of perfect calm : not a shiver disturbed the glass-like surface of the water. The tide swept the yacht, more or less, in the right direction. As soon as a little breeze arose from N.N.W., the log was streamed. It would have been just as useful packed away in its box, for it obstinately refused to take the smallest notice of the yacht's snail-like progress. A glorious evening. Barometer 30.52.

*Tuesday, August 9.* Till 2.45 a.m. the wind was barely perceptible. Then a N. breeze came of sufficient strength to set the wheel of the log rotating. For three hours the man in charge, mistaking the course, steered the yacht W. by S. instead of S.W. by S. The mistake was, luckily, of little importance, a matter of six or eight miles at the most. When the yacht was brought back to her course, the boom was gybed over to starboard, for the wind had suddenly changed to N.E. At 8 a.m. the barometer stood at 30.49. A beautiful morning with a gentle breeze from E. by N. kept the ship's company in the happiest of spirits. At 11 a.m. we brought the yacht to the wind and had a magnificent bathe. Only a man, who has enjoyed the experience, can fully comprehend the fascination of a headlong plunge into the invigorating freshness of deep-sea soundings.

In the course of the morning we noticed that the mainsail was distorted, and that the upper rim of the iron jaws was biting into the surface of the mast. This was no new trouble and was attributed, originally, to the tilting of the gaff, due to the side-slipping of the collar to which the throat halyards were hooked. But this could be no longer the reason, for now the insertion of a bolt kept the collar in its place. The sail was very dry, and, when fairly set, left little space for the free play of the halyards. This explanation of the perplexity is far from convincing, but is supported by the fact that the sail, when once we had tied down a reef, stood in a fashion that offered no ground for complaint. For the rest of the cruise the mainsail was carried curtailed by a single reef. The topsail stood, fortunately, reasonably well above the diminished sail.

The yacht's position at noon was found by observation to be in Lat.  $47^{\circ} 21' 45''$  N., and Long.  $5^{\circ} 10' 0''$  W., 44 miles from La Vieille lighthouse. The log's reading was 30. Though its line had been shortened since the Brittany cruise, when it was found to be seriously under-logging our miles, it was still somewhat shy of keeping the record of very slow progress. Walker's Patent "Excelsior Yacht-Log (Mark II.)" is a beautifully made instrument, easy to fix on the quarter, and more accurate than any log we had hitherto used. It is expensive to buy, but, undoubtedly, well worth the money which the makers demand.

Duncan was doubtful whether, after its recent stoppage, the rate of the chronometer remained still unchanged. The time-ball at Falmouth has been discontinued, and the method of getting Greenwich time arranged by the post office is entirely unsatisfactory. He had not, therefore, been able to verify, with definite certainty, the chronometer's doings. We had reason

to think later that the rate was practically the same as before.

For most of the afternoon the wind was light, but at 5 p.m. a breeze blew up from N. which increased in strength from hour to hour. Afternoon sights made our position Lat.  $47^{\circ} 12' 0''$  N., Long.  $5^{\circ} 15' 0''$  W. Log 41 miles. The barometer was beginning to fall. At 6 p.m. its reading was 30.39. The wind grew stronger and stronger, and, just before dark, we pulled down the topsail. Between 9 p.m. and midnight the clouds were blowing up from S.W., and our wind worked gradually to N.N.W. Away to the E., too far off to be heard, a widely extended thunderstorm was furiously raging. The whole horizon was lighted up by the almost unbroken glare of brilliant lightning. Log, at midnight, 66 miles. The weather looked fine, and the sea remained quiet, but the barometer had fallen to 30.33. Its steady and persistent descent began to raise in our hearts a mild apprehension of something impending. It ought to have been stated earlier in this narrative that our barometer was endowed with the irrepressible cheerfulness of a Mark Tapley, and always stood three-tenths higher than all ordinary barometers.

## II

### ILL CHANCE AND GOOD LUCK

Go patter to lubbers and swabs, do you see,  
'Bout danger and fear and the like ;  
A tight-water boat and good sea-room give me,  
And it a'nt to a little I'll strike.

DIBDIN.

*Wednesday, August 10.* At about 7.30 a.m. Duncan secured an observation for longitude which, worked out with the previous position and distance run in the interval, put us in Lat.  $46^{\circ} 12' 0''$  N., and Long.  $6^{\circ} 0' 0''$  W., whence Ortegál bore S.W. magnetic, distant 166 miles. This, as it happened, was the last observation obtained; thereafter dead reckoning was our only assistance.

The wind gradually worked to W. At 8 a.m. it was blowing freshly. Barometer 30.3. Log 112. Some sea had made, and the yacht plunged along heavily, close-hauled, on the starboard tack. Soon the sun disappeared behind a pall of low-lying clouds. Drenching rain was not long in coming. A steady growth of force was manifest in the strength of the wind, and the reef in the mainsail ceased to be regarded as a regretful necessity. While life in the cockpit was sufficiently disagreeable, conditions became every moment more miserable below. Fortunately our decks were absolutely tight, and our misery was not intensified by the maddening plague of unceasing leakage. At noon barometer 30.26. Log 131. The wind began to back to the southward of W.

By 1 p.m. the yacht was heading no higher than S.S.W. At 2.30 p.m. the jib was rolled up and the second reef put in the mainsail. The work was barely done when the rain, heavy before, fell like the discharge of a burst waterspout. After a while the rain came to an end, and the wind, without warning, flew away to N.W. We forgot, for the moment, our sodden wretchedness as, with a semblance of gaiety, we slacked away sheets, and restored the yacht to her original course. The sea grew bigger, but remained well disposed. All the afternoon the yacht continued an unchecked career. She was making short miles of the raging expanse of ocean that separated her still from the coast of Spain.

In the cabin the A.G., losing his balance, pitched head foremost to leeward, and cut the top of his cranium deeply by violent contact with a longitudinal beam. As he dropped scarcely conscious on the floor, Fife was startled into putting the foolish question: "Are you hurt?" "Hurt!" thundered the A.G. with all the concentrated bitterness of sarcastic irony that pain permitted at the moment, "Hurt! of course not—why should I be?" A few moments later, pulling himself together, he quoted the lines of Henley:

"In the fell grip of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud;  
Under the bludgeoning of chance  
My head is bloody but unbowed,"

and relieved our minds of the fear we had felt of serious injury. We were ill-equipped for dealing with fractured skulls, especially those of hard-headed barristers.

At the approach of darkness all appearances betrayed the menace of a dirty night. The sea grew still heavier, the wind showed no sign of lulling, dense masses of cloud darkened the lowering sky. With the wind on her quarter, the yacht ran with encouraging ease. Flying

crests constantly sluiced the fore deck, but she shipped no heavy seas, and her deck aft was entirely free from the inroads of salt water. The *Winnie* treated the situation with playful disdain, and soon filled with confidence the members of the crew who were, as yet, unacquainted with her powers of surmounting bad weather.

The saloon was delightfully dry, the fo'c'sle detestably wet. Beneath the tightly battened hatch water, rushing along the deck, forced a pervasive way. But the crevices, that admitted water freely, were impervious to air, with the result that the atmosphere was of mephitic unwholesomeness and murderous of slumber. Hopeless of any rest in my cot, I spread a rude couch on the cabin floor, and vainly wooed the sleep that remained obstinately aloof. Duncan, on the opposite side of the table, with a similar makeshift beneath his body, tried, with equal unsuccess, to win a transient unconsciousness of the misery of his waking hours.

*Thursday, August 11.* Relieved at the tiller by Fife, the A.G., while he made a hasty preparation for his cot, expressed, in unrestrained language, his opinion of the beastliness of conditions outside. Save for an occasional heavy lurch, the yacht sped on quietly, and it was difficult to realize from below that she was the plaything of a breeze almost violent enough to be called a gale. But at 2.45 a.m. a wild slatting of canvas and a frenzied shout from Fife hurried me on deck with break-neck rapidity. The lee staysail sheet had parted, and the sail was making frantic efforts to flap itself to pieces. By putting our weight upon the weather sheet we secured enough to muzzle the sail, till temporary repairs were effected by knotting.

Our environment was dismal in the extreme. The yacht was the centre of a horror of blackness, broken only by the phantom gleams of whitened crests. Frequent



rain-squalls acerbated the fury of a howling blast. The magnitude of the sea could be surmised from the length of the yacht's upward climb and of her deep descent again into the depths of the valleys. The wind was fair, but its excessive kindness threatened to work us a mischief. A brief consideration convinced that the time had come to heave to for a season.

The time was 3 a.m. Log 200. The quieter motion brought some measure of repose to our weary bodies. Well assured that the yacht would take care of herself, without a moment's delay I retired to my cot. By opening the hatch an inch, enough fresh air was gained to render tolerable the atmosphere of the fo'c'sle, and, though my blankets were dry only in scattered patches, I was lucky enough to snatch brief spells of unrefreshing slumber. When daylight came, new sheets were fitted to the staysail, but the yacht was left lying to for several hours longer.

At 9.45 a.m., after a prolonged and malignantly vicious squall, the wind lulled a trifle, and the yacht was put upon her course S.W. by S. Barometer 30.23. The N.W. wind was still very strong, and the sea came sweeping along in magnificent rollers, but, as the water beneath them was deep, in spite of their size they were surprisingly harmless. The absence of sun made observations impossible. This troubled us but little, for Spain was still too far distant to raise in our minds any anxiety at the yacht's rapid approach. Scratch meals, wet clothes, and want of sleep were undermining our endurance, and this rapid approach was the only thing that vivified our enervated spirits.

At 11.30 a.m. the staysail split up the middle from foot to head!

At the risk of my life, sprawling at full length upon the deck, continuously drenched by the seas that poured

on board as the yacht plunged heavily head to wind, I fought a desperate battle with the whipping fragments, and by patience, perseverance and brute force, I managed, in the end, to pull down the sail, smother its billowing folds, and lash it firmly to the heel of the bowsprit. The combat won and the jib set, I scrambled aft, on all fours, wet to the skin, full of salt water, and in the last stage of exhaustion.

My supply of dry clothing had come to an end. The A.G. pressed upon me the loan of a pair of his trousers. Unfortunately, my greater girth measurement rendered them unwearable. While I still searched among my discarded garments for something less wet to wear than the dripping clothes that clung to my shivering frame, Fife, from the cockpit, announced, in the most matter of fact tone, a disaster which paled into insignificance the splitting of the staysail.

“The rudder is bust up!”

The three below, startled out of their slackness, yelled an incredulous “What?”

“The tiller has carried away the upper part of the rudder.”

We found him holding up the tiller for our inspection. Attached to its end was the head of the rudder, which had been wrenched off cleanly beneath the rim of its iron cap. The yacht had come up into the wind. We hauled the jib to windward and laid her to.

This was a pretty dilemma—an entirely unrehearsed item on the programme of our cruise! Our hearts, for a brief space, were devitalized by the chilling clutch of consternation. But our disordered thoughts quickly recovered a saner tone. The *Winnie* was a boat notoriously easy on her helm, and the manufacture of a jury rudder seemed to lie within reach of our powers of contrivance. Nothing could be done immediately. The

application of whatever scheme was eventually devised must be postponed till the large moderation of the present heavy weather. We were in no danger of our lives. What alarmed me most, personally, was the possible appearance on the scene of a steamboat with an offer to tow us into port. Unless our fortitude was stout enough to refuse the proffered help, the cost of salvage would, indubitably, compel me to dispose of the *Winnie*. For the saving of lives at sea free service is given; for the saving of property the uttermost farthing is exacted.

A steamboat hove in sight not long after the accident. She was, at first, supposed to be a Spanish tunny boat, with which the others thought that a bargain for towage might be arranged on reasonable terms, provided that she passed by near enough to be hailed. She turned out to be a vessel of considerable size, and went past at such a distance that, in the murky atmosphere, it is improbable that she caught even a glimpse of the yacht. I eyed her distant passing with the greatest relief, as she yawed slowly ahead, burying her hull to the bridge in the uprearing billows, for while it would be idle to pretend that my mind was wholly at ease, I had, nevertheless, every confidence of our ability to win through unassisted.

At noon the log registered 216 miles. The yacht, under the canvas she carried, could not be persuaded to lie quietly at rest. She missed the check of the backed staysail and, in spite of varied manipulation of the sheets, she insisted upon forging ahead, nearly due W., at an unseasonable speed. We had on board a square sea-anchor. Unfortunately, the iron bar, with which its lower side was weighted, had slipped out of its tuck and been lost, or mislaid. Someone suggested the now useless tiller as a suitable substitute. This was firmly

laced to the bottom of the canvas, a stout coir rope was bent to the bridle and a trip-line secured to the ballasting tiller. At 3.45 p.m. all canvas, except the mizen, was taken off the yacht, and the anchor lowered over the starboard bow.

Owing to the heavy pitching of the boat, and the amount of green water that she shipped in consequence, the work of slacking away and making fast proved both difficult and dangerous. We eased away about thirty fathoms of rope. Accidentally, a foot or more too much was let go to allow the trip-line to be made fast on board independently of the warp. Our foothold forward was so precarious that, to evade the exertion of recovering the necessary amount, the trip-line was hitched to the outboard portion of the warp. The weighty tiller sank the woodwork of the anchor, and the warp, instead of streaming away ahead, led perpendicularly up and down. To prevent the heavy strain in the fair-lead from chafing the rope through, it was thickly served with every scrap of cloth or canvas that came readily to our hands.

The log then registered 227 miles. The yacht had, therefore, gone ahead in a W. direction 11 miles in rather less than four hours. Our distance at noon was between 50 and 60 miles from the Spanish coast. Riding to the sea-anchor, the yacht would drive at an unknown pace toward S.E. With mizen flattened in she rode head to wind with inspiring easiness, taking the seas slightly on the starboard bow.

None of us were physically happy, and some were mentally anxious about the upshot of the adventure. Seedy from want of sleep, I divested my chilly person of every scrap of clothing, and, wrapping myself up in a dry rug borrowed from Fife, I was soon fast asleep on the top of my cot. Duncan, in like case, after seeking rest and finding none in other parts of the yacht, shut

himself up in the sail-room, where, partly sitting, partly reclining among the sail bags, he gained some sleep and enjoyed a delightful dryness to which he had been for many hours a stranger. Long afterwards, Fife confessed that our behaviour did much to restore his lost equanimity, for, if the two men of experience had the nerve to go off quietly to sleep, surely the pickle in which we were involved must be much less serious than he had at first supposed.

At dusk the riding-light was hung up in the rigging. The barometer, 30.24, showed a slight tendency to rise. Any cheerfulness aroused by that tendency was checked by a cursory glance at the sea and the sky. Little flocks of dusky brown birds fluttered about the yacht. The A.G. affirmed that they were Mother Carey's chickens, the proverbial harbingers of bad weather at sea. Masses of heavy clouds raced across a leaden sky, the wind hummed and shrieked through the taut rigging and curving halyards, and the white-capped rollers came hurrying on, in mountainous ridges, with clock-work regularity. There were no visible signs of improving weather. On the other hand, the yacht, though she snubbed impatiently at the curb of the warp, and the head of a top-heavy sea frequently peppered the deck, rode the disturbance with surprising tranquillity. Disbelief in their usefulness, firmly implanted by the failure of previous experiments, was converted to a lively faith in the efficacy of sea-anchors. To keep a man on watch was a needless precaution. We all turned in with an assumption of careless unconcern.

*Friday, August 12.* I slept the night through till 7 a.m., when we were all roused to consciousness by the voice of the A.G. announcing, with a subtle combination of amusement and anxiety, that the warp of the anchor had parted at some unknown hour of the night. The

rupture had occurred outside the fair-lead and was, evidently, not due to the action of chafe. My regret was now great that, owing to a pusillanimous desire to avoid a further call upon our enfeebled vigour, I had not insisted upon taking the necessary steps to ensure the recovery of the sea-anchor by keeping on board the end of the trip-line.

Barometer 30.4. The wind was certainly less, and the sky was clearing. Once more no observation was possible, but there seemed to be every reason to anticipate the return of fine weather. As the yacht, under mizen alone, rode the lessening sea with quiet complacency, though, without a moment's pause, she drove rapidly astern, we decided to make a good breakfast before we approached the difficult task of finding an efficient substitute for the disabled rudder.

At 7.30 a.m., away to S.W., distant apparently 20 miles, Fife sighted the land.

During sleep my mind had been, subconsciously, adumbrating a scheme for steering the yacht. Nothing could be done with the rudder itself. It did not hang on pintles, but was fastened to the stern-post by iron bands. Even had we been able to hoist it up from the stern-post, it was manifestly impossible in a sea-way to ship it again. Among the spars carried on deck was a thick and heavy square-sail yard. A determination to replace it by a handier spar had, providentially, never been carried out, for its clumsy size and inordinate weight were now to prove the salvation of the yacht. My plan was to tow it, fitted with lines leading from its after end to either quarter. By hauling on one or other, as required, we could force the spar to perform the functions of a rudder. Duncan, however, suggested lashing it to the main-sheet horse at a convenient distance from its inner end, and using it merely as a steering-

oar. His plan, as the simpler of the two and the quicker to carry out, was forthwith adopted. Since it proved reasonably effective in use, there was no need to put to the proof my clumsier scheme.

The wind W.N.W., later in the day worked to N.W. At 8.45 a.m., under mizen and jib, heading S.W., the yacht was again under way. By this time the sun had nearly broken through the clouds, the sea was much less, and the wind was nothing more than a double-reef breeze. As the weather cleared below and the sun shone forth more brightly, it could be seen that our chance of weathering the W. point of the land, now more clearly in sight, was painfully small. Several of the mast-hoops were broken, all had burst their attachment to the sail. Their lashing was renewed and the mainsail, close reefed, experimentally set. We were delighted to find that, on a wind, the yacht readily obeyed the movements of our improvised rudder. Long sleep, fine weather, and sight of land had restored to the crew all their mental and bodily energy.

Duncan, last summer, had passed close along the coast we were now rapidly nearing, but no feature presented itself that conveyed any definite information to his mind. The difficulty of identifying a particular point or inlet was increased by the impossibility of calculating our rate of drift during the hours of lying to the sea-anchor, and by our ignorance of the time when, through the parting of the warp, the rate became vastly accelerated. In doubt about our position, we knew not exactly what to look for. To a man coming in from the sea the whole coast-line of Spain is reduced to a monotonous sameness by the near background of towering mountains. From the general contour of the land it was thought that we could not be far away from the Farallones, a conspicuous group of rocks standing

close to the coast. As a matter of fact, they were only a few miles further W., but a fringe of mist and the land in their rear hid them completely from our roving eyes.

At 0.30 p.m. we were drawing near to the coast. A prominent head five or six miles off on our starboard bow could not be named. To work to windward under short canvas with a makeshift rudder was an obvious impossibility, and we had yet to learn how far the yacht would be amenable off the wind to the slight power exercised by the spar trailing astern. Therefore, at 1 p.m., afraid to approach the land too closely, by dropping the mainsail and topping the mizen-boom, we coaxed the yacht to bear away, gybed, and ran along the coast eastwards in search of information and a harbour of refuge. Before the wind the yacht was unmanageable with the mainsail set. Fortunately, the breeze was still sufficiently strong to drive us under mizen and jib quite fast enough for the necessary comparison of coast-line and chart. Nothing was sighted that cast any light upon our position. Duncan asserted, confidently, that we had hit the land E. of Cape Estaca, but what particular part of the coast E. of that point we were skirting he was, for several hours, quite unable to decide.

Gybing again, we sailed into a broad bay of some depth having on its W. shore an insignificant town. At 3.30 p.m. Duncan conjectured that we had entered Foz bay, and even went so far as to say that he was entirely "Fozzed" as to our whereabouts, an obscure jest which, at the moment, we utterly failed to appreciate.

A certain haziness dimmed our view of the coast, but, as we ran on, we sighted, some distance ahead, the white houses of a small town perched on the slope and summit of a hill. While Fife and the A.G. below endeavoured



to persuade themselves that the position of the town in front agreed with that of Foz as depicted on the chart, Duncan, seated on the coach-roof, with binoculars glued to his eyes, deaf to their shouted opinion, examined our discovery with increasing interest. Turning to me, struggling with the steering spar, he asked: "Do you see a lighthouse low down, some way to the left of the houses?"

"Yes, I see a white something which might well be a lighthouse."

"It stands on an island, and must be left to starboard. The town is Ribadeo, and we could not have fetched a more desirable port. I have an influential friend in the place whose acquaintance I made last year, and there is a ship-building yard somewhere up the river, With a friend at court and skilled workmen within reach, we may hope to get refitted without unreasonable delay."

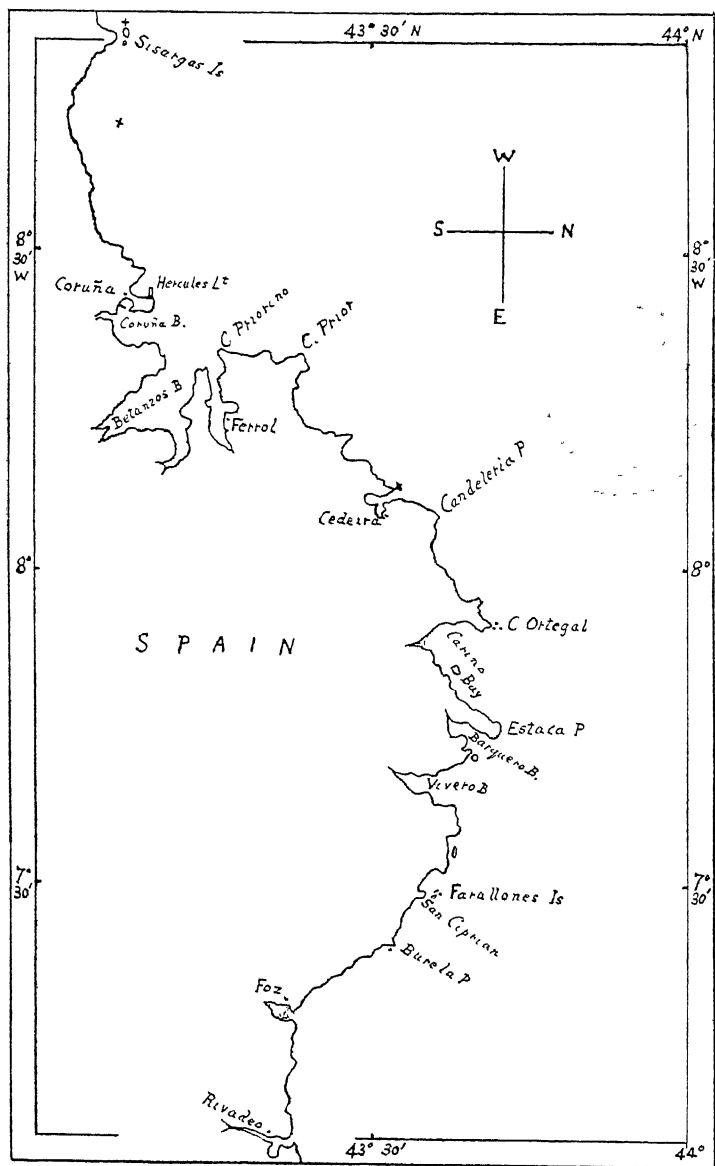
Duncan's quiet assurance knocked on the head, at once, the misdirected efforts of the pair below to force the town into the position of Foz, and lifted the cloud of gloom that was descending upon our sinking spirits. If only the wind held up, we should attain to safety before dark without the expense of accepting assistance. To spend a night at sea, close to an unknown coast, in a ship barely manageable, under the shortest of canvas, was a risk both unattractive and perilous. When the buildings of the town became more distinct, our eyes were caught by a towering edifice which crowned the hill, and wore the appearance of a modern cathedral. We were surprised to learn that it was only a private house, built by a resident, who had unexpectedly inherited a huge fortune amassed by a relative in S. America. This house he had raised as a monument of his magnificence. "*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*"

With less reason than Wren, he thought that lofty walls would form a sufficient memorial.

Evening was not far off when we drew near to the harbour. The wind had fallen light, but we had the impulse of a flood tide to help the driving power of our scanty canvas. Without overwhelming difficulty we passed up a narrow channel between a reef to the W. and a sandbank to the E., and moored the yacht at 7.10 p.m. just above a white buoy, not far from the lower end of the quay. The river everywhere is shallow, and encumbered with wide-spreading sands, but in this spot a low water depth of nine feet will always be found. The tides were neap, and the question of water for the next few days might be left in abeyance.

Before the kedge was taken away, Moon-Face appeared, and established himself as interpreter and special attendant. His English was defective, but an indisputable help. He was a round-faced and chubby long-shore individual, of any age between 18 and 30. His services were immediately commandeered to procure fresh bread and a three litre bottle of red wine, and to convey a note to advertise Duncan's friend of our arrival and need of assistance. Three carabineros were soon on board to inspect our papers. Our sole trouble with them was their reluctance to depart. The visit of a foreign yacht broke the humdrum monotony of inactive days, and they were disinclined to curtail the enjoyment of a novel excitement.

The moment they went, a boat brought alongside a Spaniard and his wife to pay us a visit. The latter was a Frenchwoman. With her the A.G. entered into an animated conversation. She had spent some months at Ribadeo and found life in the place most marvellously *triste*. Moon-Face returning from his errand while the conversation was in progress, told us with awe that the



North Coast of Spain. "Across the Bay."

man possessed a fortune of a million pesetas. Unawares, we had entertained, to the best of our powers, the owner of the monstrosity built on the summit of the hill.

It was dusk before we were free of our visitors, and able to sit down to the first comfortable square meal we had enjoyed for several days. By unanimous vote it was decided that a bottle of champagne, a gift to the yacht reserved to be drunk on our arrival at Coruña, should be consumed at once to celebrate our safe arrival in Spain. A sufficiency of red wine on the top of the champagne increased the natural cheerfulness induced by our unaided escape from an awkward adventure.

### III

#### RIBADEO

But whoso entereth within this town,  
That, sheening far, celestial seems to be,  
Disconsolate will wander up and down  
'Mid many things unsightly to strange ee.

BYRON.

*Saturday, August 13.* Barometer 30.6. Wind S., later N.E. A bright morning lighted the face of the rocky cliff off which the yacht was lying. Convenient caves therein, utilized as bathing houses, were crowded all the day. Higher up the river, occupying an outstanding bluff, the white houses of Castropol glistened in the sun. The surrounding scenery was picturesque enough to satisfy the most artistic eye.

Duncan, accompanied by the A.G., was put ashore at 11 a.m. to visit his friend, and to set in hand the business of repairs. Fife intended to follow later. Before he went, the millionaire came off to take our photographs. Intending to remain on board to give the yacht a thorough cleaning, I was still wearing my sea-going rig, whereas Fife, approaching the completion of an elaborate toilet, was a sight to gladden the gaze of even an indifferent beholder. In consequence, to Fife's delight and the confusion of our visitor, the mistake was made of attributing to me the position of paid hand, and to him the dignity of owner. Neither side understood much of the other's language, but the apologies of the man were

manifestly abject, and many signs and nods were necessary to convince him of my plenary absolution for a not uncommon mistake.

Early in the afternoon Duncan and the A.G. returned, accompanied by Moon-Face and a carpenter. It appeared that they had spent several hours in overcoming temper-trying difficulties. Duncan's friend, a very old man, was found to be in too weak a state of health to afford any active assistance. He did, however, put them in charge of a nephew who enjoyed an ill-merited reputation of proficiency in French. He proved to be a broken reed. His knowledge of French was slight, and he was ignorant of the locality of the building-yard. Soon, shamed, it is likely, by the pricking of the empty bubble, he left them with scarce a word of excuse, to battle unassisted with the quandary in which they were entangled.

A fortunate encounter with Moon-Face unravelled their perplexities. From him they learnt that the yard was up a creek on the opposite side of the river. They chartered his boat, and, with the help of his limping interpretation, managed to explain to the master-builder what damage the yacht had suffered, and the need of speedy repair. With unexampled promptitude, the builder had sent off with them a carpenter to view the damage, and to decide between the alternative needs of a new rudder-head or of an entirely new rudder.

We discovered, at once, that we were fortunate in our carpenter. He soon proved himself to be a workman of consummate ability. Acquainted only with Spanish, he was an adept in the use of signs, and expressed more by a shrug of his shoulders and wave of his hand than most people can by the utterance of many words and a lengthy explanation. We readily understood that he proposed to scarf on a new rudder-head, but, to do this, he must

have the rudder unshipped. We undertook to put the yacht ashore in readiness for him to set about the job at low water the following morning. The carpenter and Moon-Face departed together, the former confiding his tools to our care. We regarded his trust as a good augury for his punctual appearance.

Fife returned at tea-time to give an account of his mild adventures. He spent an hour in a café writing our late doings on a series of post-cards. Then, with the happy facility of making the acquaintance of all and sundry, which we had already learnt to be one of his most notable characteristics, he fell in with a man who spoke English well, and, under his guidance, visited a money-changer, saw the sights, and was introduced to the best hotel in the town. The account he gave of the lunch set before him so wrought upon our gastronomic susceptibilities that we determined to test, by consumption that very evening, the quality of the hotel's dinners. The A.G. and Fife insisted that Duncan and myself should be their guests, and we submitted, with only a pretence of resistance, to their gentle pressure.

We had endeavoured to gather from Moon-Face where a suitable place was to be found for putting the yacht ashore. He pointed vaguely to the beach at the foot of the cliff off which we were lying, but no second glance was needful to assure us that the place was hopelessly impossible. It was rough, encumbered with patches of pointed rocks, and constantly beaten by heavy surges, though the deeper water about the yacht seemed to be free from the smallest undulation. Not far higher up the river was a massive quay of considerable length. Making a tour of inspection, we discovered, at its upper end, a small tidal dock protected by short piers. A vacant wall along its N. side seemed to offer to the yacht an ideal support. High water was supposed to be

at midnight. We determined, without consulting anybody, to tow the yacht in on the last of the flood, and berth her beside the unoccupied wall.

At 7 p.m. four hungry men invaded the hotel in search of a dinner. It came as a painful shock to learn that dinner was not provided, but that supper would be served at 9 p.m. For two hours we wandered about the town, and found the time hang very heavy on our hands. Byron has written a fierce invective on the poverty and filth of Spain. While it is easy to believe that the conditions of life are vastly improved since 1812, the date of the publication of *Childe Harold*, it is almost incredible that the picture he has drawn was ever literally true. Ill-kept streets, ragged clothes, and grimy bodies are not peculiar to Spain, and evidences of poverty are less obtrusive there than in our own cities. Nowhere in Ribadeo did we observe anything to merit the scathing bitterness of the following lines :

The dingy denizens are reared in dirt ;  
No personage of high or mean degree  
Doth care for cleanness of surtout or shirt ;  
Though shent with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwashed, unhurt.

Even the narrowest streets were all brightly lighted by electricity. Quite tiny villages in Spain have the advantage of electric light. Presumably, power is cheaply raised from streams in neighbouring mountains. In the centre of the town we found a broad *plaza* crowded with well-dressed promenaders of both sexes. At the appointed hour we sat down to a meal that satisfied to the full our ravenous appetites. An army captain, suffering from a wounded leg, whose acquaintance Fife had made at lunch, begged permission to bring his family to see the yacht. We expressed a proper gratification at the proposed visit.

At 11 p.m. we returned on board, and, after changing



into working clothes, proceeded forthwith to shift the yacht. A heavy drizzle was falling, but, luckily, there was not a breath of wind to hamper our manœuvres. About 11.45 p.m. the anchors were weighed, and, with Duncan ahead in the dinghy towing and the employment aft of a sweep as required, the yacht was brought without difficulty to the entrance of the dock, and, though there was still some athwart-running tide, the piers were shot in safety, and we congratulated one another on the happy ending of our midnight flitting. Barometer 30.6.

*Sunday, August 14.* But our troubles were only now on the point of beginning. The yacht carried in too much way, and took the ground on a sandy strand at the head of the dock, a yard or more from the wall besides which we were minded to lie. Imagining that it was high water, we lost no time in running a rope away to the quay astern, and applied all our strength to the task of hauling afloat. The yacht was eventually drawn into the wall, but refused to lie peacefully beside her support. In spite of stern-rope and breast-rope, she insisted upon sluing her head inwards, and the heavy surge that rolled in between the piers set the end of her bowsprit scraping the rugged face of the wall. We spent several hours, with our backs against the wall, forcing off with our feet the yacht's bow far enough to save our endangered spar. At 4 a.m. we no longer lifted to the surge and went below wet, weary, and inclined to be ill-tempered. We were surprised that our shouting brought no carabinero on the scene to discover what was a-doing to cause all the hubbub.

Low water was due at 7 a.m. That hour came, but brought no carpenter. Duncan hastily thrust some biscuits and chocolate into his pocket, and started off in the dinghy to row to the shipyard with the intention of bringing off the truant, if necessary, by force. But at

8 a.m., when the tide was rising fast and we had sullenly reconciled ourselves to the prospect of a miserable day spent alongside the wall, the carpenter arrived with a couple of men to assist his labour, and set to work at once to unship the rudder. They were barely in time to accomplish the business. With difficulty, on account of rising water, various bolts were drawn, and the rudder, at last, lifted up to the deck. And a sorry sight it looked to our astonished eyes. The advanced state of dilapidation shown by the under-water portion came as a painful and unexpected disclosure.

By this time Duncan had returned from his fruitless expedition, and an inquest was held upon the body of the rudder, in which we were assisted by half the seafaring population of Ribadeo, various loafers, and a carabinero. The unanimous verdict was that a new rudder was an unavoidable necessity, and that, for the convenience of the carpenter, the yacht must be taken across the river to the shipyard. A strong N.E. wind was blowing, and a moment's consideration convinced us that towage with the pram was impossible, while an attempt to sail over without a rudder was doomed to failure. An appeal was, therefore, made to Moon-Face for advice. He suggested the hire of a motor-launch in which he had an interest. The suggestion was deemed worthy of consideration. A bargain was struck. He undertook the towage for 20 pesetas.

As the water rose, the yacht began to roll against the wall in an alarming fashion. At last, in desperation, I slacked up the main-halyard, which was fast to the shore, and allowed her to fall over with an outward list. This was a happy notion. Almost water-borne, she still rolled violently, but no longer came in contact with the granite-faced wall. Once afloat, she sidled up alongside and lay in restful quietude.

Though it was a Sunday, work was going on, afloat and ashore, with all the activity of an ordinary weekday. Boat after boat shot the piers, and deposited on the sloping causeway passengers, pigs, calves, ponies, and packages of wares. Some few of the passengers carried books, and were evidently intent upon the performance of their religious duties, but the majority, provided with baskets and bags, had come to the town to lay in supplies for the ensuing week. The boats were all heavy, clumsy craft, carrying a big sail which would have been a lug, had not the maker, in the middle of his work, changed his mind and tried to fashion a lateen. The yards were of inordinate length. The sail was never lowered, but rolled up from the sheet-clew, and lashed to the yard forward of the mast.

We were interested spectators of the life and bustle of the dock, when we were suddenly startled by the voice of a girl asking in excellent English, "Where do you come from?" The speaker was one of three or four girls who, with an aged woman to act as chaperon, and to manage the craft, were seated in a boat lying off the slip waiting to embark her full complement of passengers. A merry conversation followed. We discovered, without delay, that the young lady was fully able to hold her own in playful badinage. On receiving permission to take a photograph, Fife, after careful aim, fired off his camera.

"Will you send me a copy, if the photograph turns out all right?"

"Rather!" replied Fife.

"Where will you send it?" That question was a poser, but the disappearance of the boat round the pier relieved Fife of the need to reply. Little did she guess, or we either, how close on her heels we were fated to follow.

Moon-Face had promised to come with his launch at noon. That he was not punctual was scarcely surprising. Punctuality is a virtue supposed to be little practised in Spain. But as time slipped relentlessly away without bringing a sign of him or his boat, the high spirits of the morning, raised by the hope of a rapid delivery of a new rudder, sank uncontrollably lower and lower, and by 1 p.m. had descended to zero. But when we were contemplating, with open aversion, an indefinite stay in our present uneasy berth, the sounds of motor explosions came to our ears, and, a moment later, we were relieved to see the launch entering the dock. No intelligible reason was given for its late arrival. Probably the engine, as engines will, had chosen an awkward moment to show a wayward perversity.

The end of a line was thrown to the launch, and our shore ropes all hauled on board. Not without difficulty was our way made through the fleet of boats hanging to each other, while they awaited their turn to draw in to the landing-slip. But once outside the dock, the *Winnie* was plucked almost dead to windward in excellent style. An occasional touch from the sweeps, thrust out astern, was enough to keep her straight in the wake of the launch. We crossed the river proper, and entered the broad mouth of the creek, at the head of which stood the ship-building yard. Obvious signs of rapidly shoaling water were scarcely noticed before the yacht was ashore.

The tide was already falling, and we passed through some minutes of anxiety before the launch succeeded in hauling us off by the stern. Had she failed, our position would have been not only uncomfortable, but also, if bad weather supervened, unquestionably dangerous. A heavy sea would make short work of breaking up any craft on a sand as hard and unyielding as a floor of cement. Imagining that Moon-Face had missed by

only a few yards an unbuoyed channel, we failed to understand why he altered the old course and hurried us towards a little village that lay on the E. bank opposite Ribadeo. We concluded that he must be making for some channel that ran along the land to the head of the creek.

But he continued to head straight for the village, and at so great a speed that, without drastic action, the yacht seemed in danger of being piled up on the shore before her way could be checked. As our shouting to stop the engine was either misunderstood or neglected, the tow-rope was slipped, and the yacht's career brought to an end by our hanging, with might and main, to the rigging of a big fishing-boat beside which we managed to sheer. Angry and puzzled, we allowed the yacht to drive within reach of a rude causeway that extended far into the river at right angles to the land. Language of unrestrained violence was exchanged, but, as neither crew understood the remarks of the other, little harm was done, and no enlightenment thrown on the unauthorized change in the yacht's destination.

"I wonder why the deuce the blighter has brought us to this God-forgotten hole, instead of to the yard according to arrangement?" ejaculated the A.G. as he mopped a brow heated, partly by the weather, partly by blind fury.

"No water, señor."

There was a large crowd chattering on the causeway, but I detected the speaker, a clean-shaven, sailor-like fisherman.

"You speak English?"

With a deprecatory gesture he replied: "Si, señor —poco—a leetle!"

"You mean there is not enough water in the creek for the yacht to reach the yard?"

“Not enough—not till big tide come—but here is good. You lie well—and good for carpenter.”

His words explained the puzzle and promptly allayed all feelings of resentment. Following his advice, we worked the yacht to the N. side of the causeway, and were soon made securely fast by its side. The rudder was sent off in the launch to the yard with an intimation to the carpenter where the yacht was to be found.

The village was named Figueras (Castropol). The word in brackets is added to distinguish it from the many villages of the same name which are scattered freely throughout all the provinces of Spain. We had every reason to be pleased with our unexpected resting-place. Lying in a bight, it was entirely free from the roll which disquiets the water on the Ribadeo side of the river. The only drawback to the berth was the curiosity of the people. Every man, woman, and child belonging to the village crowded the causeway to welcome our arrival. Some of the women were particularly forward, and, on the immediate discovery of our ignorance of Spanish, they passed critical, and, it was shrewdly suspected, ribald remarks upon our personal appearance. The female population never troubled us after the first day, but only during the hours of darkness could we reckon upon the smallest semblance of quiet or privacy.

Lingering over a late lunch we remembered the proposed visit of the wounded warrior. It was easy to conclude that, finding us gone from Ribadeo, he would abandon his intention of visiting the yacht. Fife chanced to look out. Hastily withdrawing his head he whispered excitedly: “He’s here, and his cousins and his aunts—in fact, all his female relations!” Bidding him hold for a moment the party in play, we whisked all signs of the meal out of sight, and tidied our quarters as perfectly

as the brief time at our disposal allowed. The cabin was soon tightly packed with our visitors. They professed deep interest in all that they saw, and politely concealed their astonishment at the lunacy that sent men to sea in a craft so small as the *Winnie*. After much smiling, and bowing, and mutual misunderstanding, they took passage to Ribadeo in a waiting boat.

The moment they were gone three carabinero officers boarded the yacht. One of them had already paid an official visit, and we were puzzled to guess the reason of the presence of the three. Realizing, at last, that they were paying only a friendly call, we photographed them in a group, and expended all our energies in efforts to entertain. Fife was wearing merely a shirt and shorts of a brevity that was all but indecent, and he cunningly dismissed from the cabin our lingering guests by explaining, by signs, that he was desirous of changing this attenuated garb for more voluminous clothing.

Duncan volunteered to stand by the yacht while the rest of us went for a walk. That walk will remain an ineffaceable memory. The afternoon was hot, our throats were parched—what we really wanted was, not a walk, but unlimited beer. Impressing upon our minds that *cerveza* is the Spanish for beer, we sallied forth filled with high hope of quickly quenching our thirst with an agreeable beverage. Had the length of the walk been foreseen, other steps would have been taken to assuage my thirst.

At the head of the causeway stood a carabinero, one of our late visitors. Holding up some letters to indicate the import of my words, I enquired the way to the post office. Courteously he volunteered to act as a guide. With us came, also, a youth, who boasted the name of Frederick Shelley. We gathered that the carabinero thought it a curious coincidence that a Spanish owner

of an English name should meet the crew of an English yacht at an out of the way place like Figueras. Perhaps it was. As the young man was ignorant of English, we were unable to satisfy a mild curiosity about his right to bear so notable a name. We clambered up precipitous streets, roughly cobbled, and too narrow for the passage of a vehicle bigger than a wheelbarrow. They looked like the dry beds of mountain torrents. The post office, hidden away at the corner of a mean street, had a slit in the wall, but no other convincing sign of the important functions that it played. With some hesitation our letters were passed through the orifice. We were hardly persuaded that the building was a veritable post office.

We thanked our guides, and, as our eyes had lighted upon nothing that looked like an inn, we endeavoured by ejaculating *cerveza* to interest them in our longing for beer. We were made to understand that *cerveza* was easily procured. Off we started again, still under police guidance, and entered what was, undisguisedly, a green-grocer's shop. For a moment we feared that our desire had been misunderstood, but, later, we guessed that the establishment combined the sale of vegetables with the provision of beer. From the background advanced an elderly lady of portly build and well-developed moustache, who, in answer to the inquiry of the carabinero, shrugged her massive shoulders and shook a gloomy head. She could give no relief to thirsty throats; not a single bottle of *cerveza* was left in stock.

Wearily, and somewhat despairingly, our search was renewed. Our guide led us next to the shop of a baker, and entered with an air of ill-founded assurance. But again we drew a blank. Of bread there was an ample supply, but of beer not a drop. Failure at a third shop—this time a butcher's—robbed us of all hope.



It was evident that the thirsty village had absorbed the whole of its supply.

As we strolled on, quite careless now of whither we were taken, we met the only really beautiful girl I have ever seen in Spain. She was, manifestly, a maiden of high degree. Escorted by two elderly duennas she seemed to be bound for a neighbouring church. With a mantilla of lace, partly adorning, partly concealing her shapely head, she was very pleasant to look upon.

She was a phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight,  
A lovely apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament.

WORDSWORTH.

Each of the others declared that she cast upon them the glint of a joyous eye. Possibly they spake the truth. The brief glance swept over me was cold and disdainful, but my companions had the advantage in age, even if they suffered by comparison on the score of good looks.

After this vision glorious we were surprised to find ourselves outside the village, and, still under the same guidance, making a tour of its environs through fields of maize. We formed quite a large party. In addition to ourselves, the carabinero, and F. Shelley, there was present a boy of respectable appearance, and never less than two gutter-snipes. I trudged wearily on with an air of listless boredom. The A.G. and the carabinero conversed volubly, but it is scarcely credible that either derived from their conversation the smallest enjoyment. Worn looks betrayed the strain endured for politeness' sake. A small pleasure ground was pointed out where a band would play in the evening. We passed small farm-yards where clumsy carts and primitive ploughs reminded Fife of the rude implements still used by the natives in India. At last, drenched with perspiration outwardly

and parched to bone-dryness within, we worked round to the brow of a hill that overlooked the river. The *Winnie* lay nearly at our feet. With a whoop of delight I dashed down a steep path, with the intention of making a bee-line for the yacht, when a detaining hail from Fife checked, for a moment, my wild descent.

When I gazed back, he pointed with trembling excitement to the end house of the row that stood facing the water. "The police Johnnie," he said, on coming up, "so far as I can make out, stakes his reputation on finding beer there." Absolutely incredulous, I followed at his heels as he stalked into the house in the track of the carabinero. The house, though distinguished by no outward sign, proved to be an inn, and the landlord, in answer to our inquiry, pointed to three cases of bottled beer, not one of which had yet been unpacked. And we had walked an unknown number of miles, had endured the heat of a scorching sun and the dust of country lanes, only to find, in the end, the drink for which we longed within a stone's throw of our starting point! The joy of discovery was largely marred by irritation at our purposeless suffering.

"Is it a wet or a bath you're wanting?" a Yankee bar-keeper asked of a customer who emptied a large bottle of soda-water into a minute allowance of whisky. It is impossible to guess what caustic witticism would have risen to his lips had he seen the number of bottles emptied in the assuagement of our thirst. To our aridity any liquid that was cool would, at the moment, have tasted like nectar, but *cerveza* is really a very pretty tippie, with sufficient bite in its composition to ensure its absence from a list of teetotal drinks, and, under its influence, our irritation was presently soothed. The carabinero, Shelley, and the landlord partook of our generosity, and the ragged members of our escort through

the window still kept us under observation. A guitar was produced, and the carabinero charmed from its strings melodious strains. After a pleasant hour we bade our guides farewell, and, curiously, we never encountered either of them again. But even as I write, the memory of that useless walk yet rankles painfully in the recesses of my indignant breast.

The staysail had been entrusted to Moon-Face for repair. On our return to the yacht we found an ancient mariner inspecting with Duncan the sail spread out on the causeway for easier examination. In his younger days the man had been skipper of a coaster, knew many British ports, and still remembered a few words of English. He explained what he proposed to do, and was bidden to get on with the work at once.

In the evening Duncan and Fife sallied forth to hear the band. Uncertain of their way, they asked directions from the first responsible looking man they met. With an engaging smile Fife ejaculated the words "*La musique!*" and with mouth and hands went through the motions of playing a brazen instrument. They promptly received the required information. Later, near the band-stand, their informant, delighted by Fife's skill in solving the language problem, politely introduced all his friends and acquaintances, who pressed upon their acceptance handfuls of hazel nuts. As neither had teeth of a sort to masticate with satisfaction the favourite stand-by of monkeys and vegetarians, the offerings of friendship were passed on, surreptitiously, to the hands of expectant boys. Though they lightened their pockets, they shouldered a load of petty annoyance. In the centre of a ragged phalanx they returned to the yacht, pestered by unending requests for nuts, cigarettes, and pennies.

A crowded day of unanticipated chances came to a

peaceful conclusion. We went happily to bed. The charming placidity of our berth beside the causeway at Figueras contrasted favourably with the restless discomfort of the dock at Ribadeo. "Well, this is the end of a perfect day!" Fife was heard to murmur from his cot, with a sigh of content. What a bizarre satisfaction may be derived from a review of exasperating experiences! The remark showed unsuspected profundity in our friend's philosophy of life.

## IV

### FIGUERAS

Oh, Christ ! it is a goodly sight to see  
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land :  
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree !  
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand !

BYRON.

*Monday, August 15.* A beautiful day, not devoid of irritation. The boys were a terrible scourge. They did no actual harm, but nothing escaped their inquisitive handling. The causeway was a scene of unresting activity. Half the village seemed to live by ferrying the other half to Ribadeo and back. Old women did all the heavy work. They rolled casks about, shouldered bags, and conveyed, on stretchers, to waiting carts heavy skins of wine. Fife was engaged so busily in photographing that he failed to notice the passing of the girl with whom, yesterday, he had fought a drawn battle in the interchange of chaff. She lived in a big house overlooking the causeway, and, during the next few days, she often passed by the yacht. Her younger friends looked ready to smile, but she herself always wore an air of frowning severity. Shyness on both sides was a bar to the improvement of our slight acquaintance. Moreover, we had no wish to break, unconsciously, the stringent canons of Spanish punctiliousness, or to rouse to activity the angry passions which are said to slumber only lightly in southern hearts.

The others had scattered in various directions when

the Ribadeo millionaire landed with a large party to pay to the yacht the compliment of a second visit. The click of his camera first called my attention to his presence. He had caught me, in the scantiest attire, in the act of pulling on my shoes after washing down the decks. Moon-Face, accompanied by a boy, came for his money for the hire of the launch. He put forward another claim which I was unable to comprehend. To save confusion, Duncan had sole charge of the money bag, and managed all the pecuniary business of the yacht. To my great relief he returned at the moment from a visit to the carpenter. Moon-Face and his claim were handed over to him. Returning from below, a few moments later, I found Moon-Face and the boy still in a boat alongside, and Duncan, sitting, with an air of studied indifference, on the edge of the coach-roof. Matters were, manifestly, at a deadlock.

“What does the chap want?”

“I don’t know, skipper. These people have a way of wanting incomprehensible things.”

“Well, what’s to be done?”

“Again, I don’t know. One can only sit and wait. Light, no doubt, will come in time.”

The cloud of mystery was soon lifted. Down the causeway strode the fisherman who had enlightened our darkness yesterday, and, pressed into service, instantly enlightened the darkness in which we were freshly enveloped. Moon-Face wanted his money for the hire of the launch—so far we had understood—and the boy had been sent with the blacksmith’s bill for the new tiller already delivered. Both claims were immediately satisfied.

In the afternoon, as I smoked in the cockpit, the yacht was boarded by a man who spoke English fluently. He had, it appeared, spent much of his life in American

liners. After a desultory conversation he remarked :  
“ I guess your bosses are pretty rich men.”

My assurance that we were all men of small means, enjoying a hardly-earned holiday, was heard with politely veiled scepticism. He objected that it was easy to see by their clothes that they were wealthy gentlemen, and bluntly insinuated that my garb and rare absence from the yacht betrayed the status of the paid hand. He took himself off, plainly resentful of the delighted laughter with which his views were received. Had he been better acquainted with yachts and yachting, he would have known that no paid hand would dare to appear on deck in my discoloured and sea-stained garments.

Soon after his departure I discovered gazing at the yacht a bevy of girls of gentler birth than the majority of those who frequented the causeway. Near by stood an elderly man, of rounded paunch and mean appearance, who, we had learnt, by reason of the ownership of three tunny-curing factories and consequent employment of much female labour, occupied a position of large importance in the eyes of his neighbours. We all felt for him an irrational dislike, and the A.G. declared his firm conviction that he was making, with sweated labour, an unrighteous fortune. Still, he was endured with patience, because he spoke a certain amount of broken English and, more than once, had rescued us from minor perplexities.

“ The señoritas want see ship,” he observed, either prompted by them or on his own initiative. With a wave of the arm and an encouraging grin, I offered to the damsels the freedom of the yacht.

Evidently greatly daring, one after the other, they accepted the assistance of my hand to make the short step from the causeway to the deck, and, with a little

persuasion, adventured the steep descent to the depths of the cabin. My cot in the fo'c'sle, hanging down ready for use, attracted great attention. Their curiosity was soon satisfied. All shook my hand at parting. Young and shy as they were, they had all learnt, with creditable thoroughness, the art of using their eyes.

My next batch of visitors was also composed of girls, but girls of a much less alluring type. They came, undoubtedly, from the tunny-curing factories, and, without waiting for an invitation, rushed the yacht in a mass. They tested the comfort of the cot, in turn, by actual experiment, and, quickly wearying of such insipid amusement, began a boisterous game of follow-your-leader by dashing down the companion ladder, shouldering a noisy way through the cabin, and popping up through the fo'c'sle hatch. Duncan was sighted approaching in the dinghy. "Hurry up, old man," I shouted, "bear a hand! There are forty thousand young women on board possessed by the same number of irresponsible devils!"

He came up the causeway with exasperating deliberation. After gazing in silence for a moment on the scene he remarked with severity, "Forty thousand! I can count only seventeen!" But literal exactness of language can scarcely be expected from a bashful man, who, unaided, is facing an invasion of frenzied viragoes.

Then a tunny-boat appeared round the point. As the water was low, she crept cautiously up the shallow channel, and dropped her anchor near the end of the causeway. Her coming drew away, at once, our self-invited visitors. The moment the anchor was down, the catch was landed in boats, and every girl and woman in the place spent a toilsome hour in conveying the fish away to the factories. The ketch-rigged French tunny-boats, with their fishing poles extended like long antennæ,



and every possible stitch of canvas set to catch the fluttering breezes, form a picturesque and distinctive feature of the Brittany waters. But on the Spanish coasts steam has superseded canvas. The tunny-boats, all of the same type, are small steamboats of about 20 tons. Doubtless they catch more fish, but they are hopelessly commonplace in appearance. They are said to be fast, and must, of necessity, be good sea-boats. Sea-worthiness is an essential characteristic of all craft that ply their calling in the rolling waters of the Bay of Biscay.

In the dusk, while we enjoyed the cool of the evening and the much appreciated absence of boys, who, for the time being, had turned their attention from the yacht to the tunny-boat, a fisherman just in from the sea greeted us in perfect English. Till the war he had spent all his working life on board English ships, and was eager to return to his former employment, but understood that, owing to the number of ships laid up, a foreigner had little chance of obtaining a berth. He forced upon us a couple of mackerel for breakfast. These were cleaned immediately, and hung in the rigging to dry.

When the tide rose, the tunny-boat drew in to the causeway, and moored close up to the stern of the yacht. An endless chain of old women and young girls was engaged for hours in carrying buckets of fresh water to fill up her tanks. We went to bed in the midst of a hubbub that recalled the noise of a country fair.

*Tuesday, August 16.* The confusion ashore was too great to allow of much sleep. At 1.30 a.m., high water, a very intoxicated crew cast off their lines, and put forth to sea. When, on her grounding, I went on deck to ensure the yacht's listing against the causeway, I was astonished to notice that the mackerel had disappeared. The donor, later in the day, suggested that the thief was

probably a cat. These harmless necessary animals had, at Figueras, acquired such irresistible longing for fish that the men were obliged to keep their bait in closely locked boxes. A box left inadvertently unlocked would surely be found empty in the morning.

Cats had not attracted our attention. What we had noticed, with incurious surprise, was the number of pigs that roamed through the streets of Figueras and the outskirts of Ribadeo. Long-legged, floppy-eared pets, they grunted a serene way between the passers-by, calmly indifferent to the wheedling tones and plaintive directions of the aged women, or young children, their appointed guardians. They were kept beautifully clean. More than once we saw one submitting, with appreciative resignation, to a salt-water bath.

At 8 a.m. we were roused by the hammering of the carpenter, as he cleaned up the sternpost ready for the reception of the rudder. Some new bolts were needed, and Duncan and the A.G. crossed over to Ribadeo to see about their manufacture. Fife on deck, in the presence of an interested crowd, amused himself by cleaning the knives, and, when that duty was finished, betook himself to polishing the brass buttons of one of his jackets. Intense excitement prevailed, caused either by the workmanlike skill he brought to the task, or by the dazzling brilliancy which, in answer to his rubbing, the buttons quickly assumed.

The owner of the tunny-curing factories spent much of the morning in making inquiries of Fife about our respective positions on board.

"Who captain?" Fife pointed to me.

"Who mate?"

"All mates!" was the cheerful reply.

"All mates—no, not right," the man objected testily.

"No mate, then, if you like that better."

"No mate—who cook?"

Fife nodded in my direction.

"Captain and cook—no mate—not good!"

"Oh, that's nothing," continued the irrepressible Fife. "He's the Lord High Admiral and chief of the Bottlewashers, the Director of Torpedoes and Inspector of Nuisances as well!" Feeling, possibly, that he was being treated with derision, the man withdrew for a while, but, soon returning, tackled Fife on political questions.

"Ireland ver' bad, ver' bad for England."

"Look here, old son," cried Fife, shaking in his face the brush with which at the moment he was polishing his boots: "Don't you worry about Ireland! Turn your blooming thoughts on Morocco—on Morocco—do you hear?—on Morocco!" While uttering these last words in a leonine roar, he drew himself up to his full height, inflated his mighty chest, and pointed imperiously to the head of the causeway. Bad news had lately arrived from Morocco. The man moved slowly away, and, for the rest of our stay, left us severely alone. From the grins of the onlookers we guessed that our tormentor was not an entirely popular character.

The ancient mariner brought back the staysail very neatly repaired, and astonished us by charging only 7½ pesetas for his work.

The fisherman who had given us the mackerel had agreed to take this afternoon to a little place five miles up the river any of the crew that wished to make the excursion. He failed to keep his appointment punctually. After waiting some time, the other three, afraid of missing the tide, chartered another boat, and started off with a fair wind. They were barely out of sight when the fisherman came alongside and was grievously disappointed at losing his engagement. His 18-foot boat

was a fine craft, fitted with a centre keel and the local modified lateen. Since 3 a.m. he had been fishing at sea, and his unpunctuality was caused by a temporary cessation of wind. He had a basketful of nice bream and a conger eel of 20lbs. In the boat were two large boxes filled with live crabs. Pounded into pulp, crabs formed the general ground-bait. Without the temptation of ground-bait no fish could be caught. We had an amusing conversation.

“Who is the captain of this yacht?”

“I am the captain and the owner, too.”

My statement was accepted with obvious reserve.

“Well, ashore,” he continued, “we all think the old man is the captain.”

I chuckled with delight, amusedly picturing Duncan’s disgust at learning the appellation by which he was known. Still, the view of the village was not unnatural since, in all matters connected with the shore, the work of the carpenter, the purchase of supplies, the disbursement of money, Duncan, as having the greatest experience of Spain and the Spaniards, was invariably thrust into the position of the yacht’s representative.

“Old man! What are you talking about? I am the only old man.”

“Oh, you! we reckon you are the hand.”

Vain was my assurance that we were all socially equal. He was too polite to call me a liar of the first magnitude, but he made little effort to conceal his disbelief in my assurance. Changing the subject, he gave his opinion about the war in Morocco. His view was that lives and treasure were being wasted to retain for their owners a few unprofitable mines.

The afternoon was very hot and the boys an unmitigated nuisance. “What is to be done with these rascals?” I asked the man who had served in American vessels.

" You get a rope's end, boss, and hit them like hell ! " was his reply.

The idea had occurred to me already, but, in obedience to the prayers of the crew, it had not been put into execution. They thought that open war would be worse than more or less amicable skirmishing. Very likely their view was correct. The boys, they assured me, compared with Dutch boys, were angels of light. In that case, the sons of Holland must be devils incarnate.

A man offered me a copy of the *Daily Mail* (Continental edition) and of the French paper *Le Journal*, both of recent date, at the price of a peseta. The charge was exorbitant, and his offer was refused. Thereupon he jumped to the other extreme, and sold me the two for 2d.

Shortly before 6 p.m., when I was expecting the return of the explorers, a man seated himself on the coach-roof with the gravest deliberation. He was immediately joined by another. In a few moments I was the centre of a row of six burly fishermen. No attempt at conversation was made by either side. We smoked in profound silence. When the others returned, they quietly retired. Either they pitied my lonely state, or took this method of expressing their sympathy. For there was a threat of trouble in the air. Early in the afternoon a verbal message was delivered from the Captain of the Port at Ribadeo that the captain of the yacht must, without fail, report himself at his office on the morrow, and boat after boat hurled the same message at the others as they returned to the causeway. We were much surprised at the informality of the summons, and, as we had conformed with all the custom-house regulations, we could not imagine of what offence we had been, unwittingly, guilty.

Leaving the A.G. in charge, we walked in the evening

to the shipyard to see what progress had been made with the rudder. The yard was further away by land than we had anticipated, and we increased the distance by losing our way. When, after some wandering, we reached the place, we found a quaint combination of shipyard and farm buildings. The nearly completed hull of a 300-ton vessel was on the stocks; within a few yards were stables, cowhouses, and manure heaps. In working hours the noise of saw and adze must be punctuated by the cluck of fowls and the grunt of pigs.

The backbone of the rudder, a good piece of oak, was completely finished: there remained to be done the bolting to it of the after portion of the old rudder, which, though its original hardness was going, was deemed still fit for some further service. While to replace it with new timber was the better plan, we shrank from the delay the further work involved. On the road back a discussion on the possible methods of floating the new vessel through the shallow creek into the deeper water of the river was suddenly interrupted by the ear-piercing skirl of unmelodious bagpipes. Before long, we traced the music to the squealing wheels of a train of ox-drawn carts. Both Duncan and Fife, though their names betray a Scotch descent, readily admitted that the squeal fell not a whit behind the skirl in musical charm.

*Wednesday, August 17.* When, at 1.30 a.m., the yacht began to lift to the flowing tide, the wind was blowing hard from W. and a troublesome lop was running. In heavy rain I did my best, by tending ropes already out, and by taking others away, to check the wild rushes of the surging yacht. It was 3 a.m. before she settled down to quietude, and I was able to resume my interrupted slumber.

At 10 a.m., dressed in my best shore-going outfit, I crossed to Ribadeo, and, guided by a complaisant carabinero, reached the office of the Captain of the Port. My reception was entirely friendly. Unfortunately, in my haste to depart, I had forgotten to pocket my passport and the yacht's papers. A shame-faced return to Figueras to get them was a fitting punishment for my careless oversight. All the boatmen and loungers, on either shore, were well aware of my errand, and astonished at my speedy return.

On my second visit the advancement of proceedings was, at first, painfully slow. We tried French, but, as the captain knew of that language only a little more than I did myself of Spanish, it proved a tedious medium of mutual explanation. When, at last, an interpreter was secured, all became plain sailing. An account was demanded of our mishap and of our position when it occurred. That point settled, the business ended. The captain impressed upon me the need, when we applied for our clearance, of compelling the custom-house to endorse our papers with the reason of our visit to Ribadeo, for, otherwise, we might have trouble at Coruña to explain our change of port. Over a glass of vermouth I endeavoured to find out from the interpreter why the Captain of the Port had demanded my presence, but he had no explanation to offer. We have never been able to decide whether the business was due to red-tape, to curiosity, or to a desire to help strangers, probably ignorant of the necessary routine. An elderly friend who has spent most of his life in Spain, on hearing of the incident, attributed the interview, with a cynical laugh, to an itching palm and the hope of a bribe. If the charge is true, the hope was so successfully concealed that not the vaguest suspicion was roused in my innocent heart.

At the Ribadeo dock a gang of women was conveying on their heads into the town bags of coarse salt, unloaded from a restless barge. One of them, whom I recognized as an inhabitant of Figueras, seized my arm, as I was on the point of stepping into a boat, and, in great excitement, did her best to hold me back. Completely puzzled, I shook off her grasp, and made a second attempt to board the boat. "*N'embarquez pas—n'embarquez pas!*" she shrieked. Looking into the boat, I saw the reason of her excitement. The bottom was occupied by a sow and a litter of pigs, not altogether agreeable fellow passengers for even a short journey. Raising my hat in acknowledgment of the lady's French, which had saved me from possible unpleasantness, I stepped, amid general laughter, into the boat that stood next on the roster.

About 1 p.m. the tunny-boat returned, and, taking up a berth outside the yacht, landed her fish across our decks. Her catch, fortunately, was not very heavy. When the work was done, she drew off and went away. Duncan and the A.G. made an expedition in the dinghy to the shipyard with a faint hope of towing the rudder down to the yacht. They returned late, without the rudder, but they had kept an unwilling carpenter hard at work, and had the satisfaction of seeing it finished before they departed. They engaged the fisherman, who had missed his appointment yesterday, to take them in his boat to-morrow morning at 4 a.m. to the yard to bring the rudder down. That early hour was fixed to save a sufficient depth of water for the passage back.

Figueras enjoys the advantage of a public water-tap. All the afternoon was spent by Fife, assisted for a trifle by a boy, in replenishing the water-tank. The work was laborious and slow. The tap poured forth only a dilatory stream, and there was always a long



queue of women and girls waiting to fill their buckets. Fife had, of course, to take his turn. Still, he seemed to find the work not uncongenial. He had acquired a high degree of popularity with all the inhabitants of either sex, and swayed the children with the weird power of a Pied Piper. The A.G. declared that he had overheard him named "El drolo," which, if it is Spanish at all, could not but signify "the funny man."

The day was dull and showery, and we were fearful that the fine weather was about to break. At dark the W.N.W. wind blew strongly, the sky looked bad, and the barometer had fallen to 30.3. As soon as the tide had risen enough, the tunny-boat reappeared, took up again a berth outside the yacht, and proceeded to embark across our decks a cargo of water.

*Thursday, August 18.* The tramping backwards and forwards and the general turmoil just above our heads kept me awake so long that, when the fisherman called us at 4 a.m., though the yacht was surging violently to and fro, I was held in the thrall of the deepest slumber. Leaving me behind to tend our ropes, the other three were quickly away on their errand. They were back by 6 a.m. in triumph, with the rudder on board. At 7 a.m. the carpenter began the last stage of his work, and, assisted by every able-bodied man about the place, had by 10 a.m., in spite of the interruption of heavy showers, finished the operation of attaching the rudder anew to its post.

Next followed a short period of embarrassment. To the carpenter was presented a five peseta note as a small personal gift. He and his helpers stood about expectantly, but no bill was presented, nor intimation conveyed of the amount of our debt. The Yankee fisherman, sitting on the edge of the companion hatch, at last remarked in a tone of annihilating severity:

“Why don’t you pay the money, captain, and let the poor man go?”

“That’s what we want to do—how much is it?”

“A hundred pesetas—and cheap at that!”

The money was handed over and our tottering credit restored. After a warm farewell, the carpenter shouldered his bag of tools and was seen no more. As all his helpers disappeared at the same time, we had little doubt that assistance rendered was being rewarded by liquid refreshment. It was a great piece of good luck to fall in with so skilled a workman, and the amount demanded—something under £4 in English money—while sufficient, was by no means excessive.

Ever since the head was carried away, my mind had been filled with a shrewd suspicion that I was held to blame for proceeding to sea with a defective rudder. After our return, it was admitted that my suspicion was correct. I was so innocent of such folly that the suspicion failed entirely to cloud my cheerfulness. The closest examination could not have detected a flaw in the head of the rudder, and the lower portion had been put, under my own eyes, into a perfect state of repair. Wrapping myself in the cloak of conscious virtue, I attempted no defence.

And oftentimes excusing of a fault  
Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse.

SHAKESPEARE.

That a lost character is difficult to regain is exemplified by the unfortunate experience of Mary Jones.

Mary Jones, on her way to interview a prospective employer, came to a river. Proudly showing the ferryman the character given by her late mistress, she had the misfortune to let the precious paper slip from her fingers and to lose it in the water. “Never mind,”

said the ferryman to soothe her distress, "I'll give you a certificate!" He wrote on the back of an envelope: "This is to certify that Mary Jones lost her character while crossing the river in the boat with me." One can suppose that the unfortunate wording of a true statement did little to further the best interests of the unlucky girl.

In a heavy rainstorm one went ashore for bread, another for beer. They found the narrow streets turned into raging torrents, while the unguttered roofs spouted waterfalls upon the heads of incautious wayfarers. When we floated at 2.30 p.m. the kedge was run away in a calm, and the yacht hauled off stern-first from the causeway. A little breeze blew up, and, close hauled, we fetched over to the neighbourhood of our original anchorage. Owing to delay in letting go, caused by the fouling of the anchor in the bobstay, we failed to bring up exactly in the spot we had intended. Though the N. wind was light, the roll was heavy, and, as spring-tides were at their height, we knew that there was none too much water beneath our keel.

Moon-Face came on board with a demand for the payment of 20 pesetas. It took us a long time to discover that the charge represented the cost of the canvas used in the repair of the staysail. It seemed a lot to pay, but we paid without demur. Now we understood the smallness of the charge made by the ancient mariner. It represented only labour and twine. Duncan, for mysterious reasons, was very sanguine of the possibility of getting away on the morrow. At low water the yacht touched several times, but scarcely heavily enough to attract our attention. Barometer 30.3.

*Friday, August 19.*—At 7 a.m. there was a S.W. draught. The anchors were weighed and the yacht

allowed to drive into a deeper berth. Barometer 30.3. The morning was spent in provisioning and in securing our papers from the custom-house. At lunch we came to the unwilling conclusion that a start in the afternoon was as unwise as useless. A very faint N.W. wind was blowing, and, though the barometer remained unmoved at 30.3, the sky wore a most discouraging look, and rain was falling in blinding torrents. Till high water, at 4 p.m., the yacht lay undisturbed : thereafter a heavy tidal roll destroyed every vestige of quiet and comfort.

“ We were all eager to leave Figueras—is this a change for the better ? ” was the querulous inquiry of one of the *Winnie’s* crew.

“ Emphatically—No ! ” snorted another, whose stomach began to show signs of unsteadiness.

They dined ashore. To save my pocket, and because of some anxiety about what might happen at low water, I remained on board. As the tide fell, the swell largely subsided, and, though the yacht struck several times, the striking was too gentle to raise any alarm. Wind N.W. Barometer 30.3.

A full account of our life ashore has been given, not so much on account of its intrinsic interest, as because it will serve to show the little perplexities likely to be encountered by a stranger, unacquainted with the people and ignorant of their language. Among the inhabitants of villages like Figueras, uncorrupted by the vices of the larger towns, honesty is in the ascendant and petty thievery an unknown crime. But the big ports are places of evil repute. In them every form of dishonesty is rife, and only with the gravest risk can a yacht, even for a brief space, be left unattended.

## V

### CORUÑA : RETURN VOYAGE

From here the courses go over the seas,  
Along which the intent prowls wonderfully  
Nose like lean hounds, and track their journeys out,  
Making for harbours as some sleuth was laid  
For them to follow on their shifting road.

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE.

*Saturday, August 20.* We were roused by Duncan at 5.15 a.m. with the information that there was enough S.W. wind to take us to sea. No time was wasted in weighing the anchors and in setting our canvas. The light draught and strong ebb soon swept the yacht out of the river. Barometer 30.35. We rejoiced exceedingly in putting Ribadeo astern, though, it must be admitted, we might easily have found ourselves in a much less satisfactory haven. Shoal water makes the river impracticable for vessels of deep draught, and we found no difficulty in believing that, during the wild weather of winter, its entry is impossible for any craft whatever.

At 7 a.m. we rounded the lighthouse, and the yacht was put on her course N.W. for Burela point, distant 15 miles. The land breeze soon failed and the wind came dead ahead. Till 10 a.m. we held out to sea. On starboard tack, heading W. and W. by N., the yacht made the land at 1.20 p.m. abreast of Foz. The day was fine, the wind, though ahead, was of pleasant quality, and the sea was only slight. At 3.15 p.m. Burela point was weathered, and soon we were approaching the spot we had made a week ago. Ahead could be seen the lofty

pinnacles of the Farallones islands, which uplift their heads not far E. of Estaca point. Last week they remained invisible, either beneath a shroud of mist, or because the yacht was not brought near enough to the shore for daylight to be seen between them and the mainland.

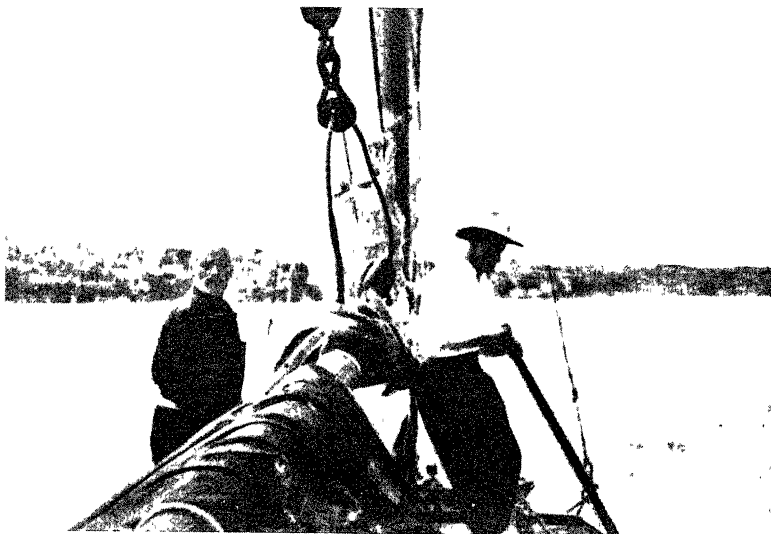
At 6.30 p.m. the land was buried in a heavy bank of fog, but the yacht, heading W.N.W., began to go faster along the coast. There are several openings in the neighbourhood of Estaca point, deeply cleft in the lofty land, and regarded as safe harbours by the compilers of the sailing directions. But the possibility of repairs in the small villages at their heads was extremely remote, and we saw no reason to change our self-congratulation that fate had sent us to Ribadeo rather than to any one of them. The fog lifted to some extent at dusk. Barometer 30.39.

*Sunday, August 21.* At 1.30 a.m. Estaca light bore S. about three miles away. Though it is supposed to be one of the highest grade, like all the lights we had hitherto seen on the Spanish coasts, it seemed to have little power of illumination. The land now breaks away in a more S. direction, and a steady N. breeze was blowing. At 3.30 a.m. the yacht was off Aguillonos, the N. extremity of the high land which ends to the S. in Cape Ortegal. An hour later the loom of the latter could be vaguely distinguished, and the yacht's head was gradually brought to W.S.W. Heavy rain was falling, and the darkness was intense. In the distance, seaward, two separate thunderstorms were raging with tremendous violence. At 6 a.m., off Cedeira, the wind fell very light. From 7 a.m. the yacht advanced only at her tardiest pace towards the bulky mass of Cape Prior. A heavy roll shook out of her sails the faint breeze that blew from dead astern.

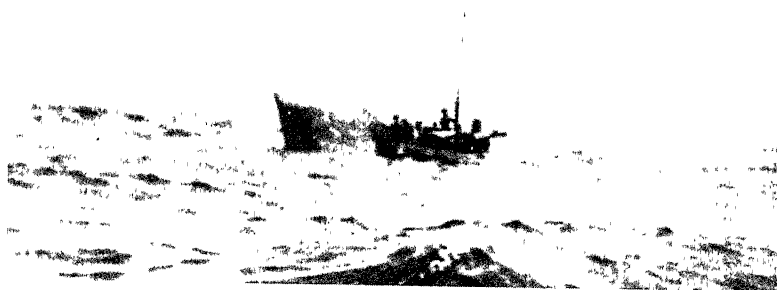
At 10 a.m. a N.E. air was just perceptible. Barometer 30.4. The breeze grew steadily, and the yacht, with all sail set, was not long in passing Cape Prior. We ran through a fleet of fishing boats using the strangest of gear. By means of a tackle, hooked to the end of a yard, the crews hoisted to the surface of the water, and slung on board, an iron hoop of large diameter fitted beneath with a bag-like net. The men on the first one we passed closely, presumably in token of friendship, pelted the yacht with fish of a size convenient for throwing. All the others within range followed suit. Most of the missiles fell short: some hit the sails, but fell overboard. Of all thrown only one was secured, a bream of about a pound in weight.

We were crossing the wide bay out of which run the subsidiary inlets of Ferrol, Betanzos and Coruña. Soon we sighted the statue of Hercules which stands at the N. end of the Coruña peninsula. In no long time we left this to starboard, and ran on towards the head of Coruña bay. As we gybed to haul in to starboard to round a buoy and a castle-crowned island of rock, the N.E. limit of the harbour, a big barge under a press of sail overhauled us and left the *Winnie* as though she were standing still. Fife was greatly disgusted till, hauling her wind to beat to the head of the harbour, the *Winnie*, in her turn, left the barge struggling hopelessly astern. The anchor was dropped at 2.45 p.m.

Lying on the E. shore of a short peninsula which projects in a N. direction, Coruña harbour is completely landlocked without the extraneous aid of artificial protection. Unlike the majority of Spanish ports, its surface is never disturbed by a roll from the ocean. What little motion may, from time to time, ruffle its placid waters is entirely of local production. The town, situated at the N. end of the harbour, has an imposing appearance,



Crossing to the ship-yard Skipper and A. G



Strange fishing gear.



is of considerable size, and is enriched by a large sea-borne home and foreign trade. Just outside the town, in a piece of enclosed ground, stands the monument erected to the memory of Sir John Moore.

We had a meal in a contented frame of mind. The yacht had been long in coming, but she had reached her goal at last. And the members of her crew, as so often happens when success is won, were in no way immoderately excited by the attainment of their object.

Duncan paid a visit to the English consul, who had undertaken to keep an eye on the welfare of the *Sirius* during the absence of her owner, but, as the day was Sunday, the office was closed and the official absent. In the late afternoon there was a lot of wind. Barometer 30.45.

*Monday, August 22.* Wind N.W. Barometer 30.45. A boat came alongside, rowed by a man who spoke a little French, and seemed to be a shipchandler's tout. He put Duncan and the A.G. ashore. While they were engaged with the consul, I took the yacht's papers to the Sanidad, and, by flourishing them about, I made my business understood. A man pulled out his watch, and pointing to the figure 12, indicated that my business must be postponed till noon.

The *Sirius* was lying a few miles away, just out of sight, up the River Burgos, which empties its waters into the upper end of the bay. With the help of the consul a launch was hired to tow her round at high water to a berth close to the *Winnie*. Meantime a motor car was to take her crew overland to put the gear on board, and to have her ready by the time that the launch should arrive. Fife volunteered to lend a hand, and, shortly after noon, the three, accompanied by a clerk from the consular office, drove off with the merriment of a party bound to a beanfeast.

My business with the Sanidad was managed with ease, for the man who took me in hand not only spoke English fluently, but also, differing therein from most Spanish officials, understood, to a certain extent, the sea-obsession which urges men to adventurous voyages in small craft. To spare me the trouble of calling again, he handed over, at once, the yacht's clearance papers, and, on reading my signature, remarked: "Ah yes—Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter—an ancestor?" Honesty compelled me to answer the question by a negative shake of the head.

The early part of the afternoon was spent in making some slight refitments necessary for the approaching voyage across the Bay back to Falmouth. The yacht was visited by representatives of a big business house. They were three young men, one of whom spoke French. Regarding me as a paid hand, they behaved in a free and familiar fashion, and it was only by the offer of personal violence that they were restrained from forcing their unwelcome presence on board. I gathered that, for a large order, a considerable percentage on the bill would reach my hands, and that, if the captain came ashore in the evening, they would act as guides and show him the livelier side of life at Coruña. Only hardly were they persuaded of my absolute refusal both of goods and of guidance.

The afternoon slipped by. The hour of high water came and passed, but nothing hove in sight with the *Sirius* in tow. At 7 p.m. a big launch was observed making towards the yacht with the A.G. standing in a conspicuous position on her deck. In answer to my look of inquiry he laconically shouted "Neaped!" He leapt neatly on board, and unfolded a lamentable story.

They found the *Sirius* high and dry on the sands, but

nicely painted and in excellent trim. In good spirits they hustled her gear on board, and made every preparation to go the moment the launch arrived. That appeared early on the scene. But, at high water, the *Sirius* did not float, and, though a powerful pull was applied, she refused to move. This was bad, but not the worst. The tides were taking off, and the skipper of the launch declared, emphatically, that there was not the smallest hope of his dragging the boat into deep water before the lapse of, at least, ten days. While Duncan remained on board to guard his belongings, the A.G. had returned to arrange for a boat to tranship on the morrow their stores and baggage. He had some tea, and went ashore to dine. Fife, desiring exercise, had decided to walk back. He, too, dined ashore, and came on board late. I spent a solitary and very miserable evening.

The delay caused by the loss of the rudder had utterly spoiled the cruise of the *Sirius*.\* Though my conscience acquitted me entirely of any responsibility for that disaster, my sympathy with Duncan's disappointment mightily oppressed my spirits. At Figueras he had been begged to leave Fife and myself to muddle through as best we could, and, with the A.G., to make off at full speed across country to his boat. But the lack of railway communication, and, above all, his generous loyalty prevented him from listening to my earnest solicitation. Wind for the most of the day, W.N.W. Heavy showers fell at intervals.

*Tuesday, August 23.* We turned out early. The wind, at first W., veered to N.W. Barometer 30.5. The A.G. hastened ashore to make necessary arrangements. Fife was sent off to shop. The former returned

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\* Note by Duncan. "No, it did not spoil, it merely curtailed. I would not have missed on any account the excellent entertainment provided by the *Winnie*."

at noon, successful in his search for a boat. Among Fife's purchases were two gallons of paraffin. For them had been exacted a charge of 20 pesetas. It was very poor stuff, too, and threw off the offensive effluvium of a badly flushed drain. One tradesman in Coruña is not above the meanness of cheating an inexperienced customer.

The time fixed for the boat's coming was 2 p.m. When, at 2.15 p.m., there was no sign of its approach, well as we were aware of the people's dilatory methods, we began to grow anxious. But our anxiety was groundless. The boat eventually arrived, and we bade a hurried farewell to the A.G. in person and to Duncan by proxy. How, thanks to the deft wielding of spades, they dug the *Sirius* out of her sandy bed, how burglars robbed them of their most treasured possessions at Coruña, how, in anger and dismay, they fled from that wicked city, how they worked the yacht to Vigo, and what adventures they encountered on the way—all these must be left to her skipper to tell in his own good time.

The yacht seemed to be abnormally silent and empty. We cleaned up below, and talked regretfully of those we had lost. During the temporary absence of Fife, the three touts, who visited the yacht yesterday, came alongside again. They expressed astonishment that the captain had not kept his engagement to meet them the evening before, and pressed upon me the purchase of every imaginable article from "beef to beefsteak" to spirits and cigars. They were determined to sell me something. I bade them, in the most unparliamentary language, to take themselves off. "*Mais attendez, capitaine,*" protested the French-speaking youth as he attempted to put his feet on the deck. "*Va-t-en,*" I replied quietly, but I picked up the tiller, a heavy and convenient weapon for the repelling of boarders, and,

presumably, there was a flash in my eye which disclosed an intention to use it, for he stepped back hastily and, missing a thwart, collapsed on the floor of the boat with an undignified crash. After that they went. Conceited over their discomfiture, I murmured Hamlet's words :

"Though I am not splenitive and rash,  
Yet have I something in me dangerous."

My watch was in dry-dock ; Fife's required the treatment of Captain Cuttle's historic timepiece : " Put it back half an hour every morning and about another quarter towards the afternoon, and you've a watch as can be ekalled by few and excelled by none." But a watch of this type is untrustworthy for sea-work, and, as a measure of prudence, a small American alarm clock was purchased at a reasonable price. We celebrated our last night in Coruña by eating a magnificent supper at the Palace Hotel, and, afterwards, had a chat with a stray Englishman who was visiting Spain on a matter of business.

The boat-slip beneath the Sanidad Maritima is a safe place at which to leave a dinghy. A carabinero post is established near, and a word to the man on duty will ensure the safety of the boat. It was a little surprising to find that here, as elsewhere, a carabinero cannot be persuaded to accept a tip. Barometer at night 30.48.

*Wednesday, August 24.* Very peaceful was the commencement of our homeward voyage. At 4.30 a.m. we were awakened by the alarm of the new clock. Barometer 30.51. The calm water was ruffled only by variable catspaws from W. and S.W. With the help of the sweep the yacht was worked slowly out of the harbour. The tide was still flood, but a breeze from S.E. came strong enough to force us slowly over the stream. By 7.30 a.m. we were outside Coruña bay, and, with a gentle E. wind in her sails, the yacht was

headed N.N.E. for Cape Prior, barely distinguishable through the haze of the morning. Soon it was calm. When, in an hour's time, the wind piped up again, it blew from N.E., the worst of all quarters for our journey home. We had no time to wait for a fair wind. Fife must be landed on English shores as soon as was possible. His passage to India was booked for the middle of September, and various matters of importance required his personal attention before the date of his sailing.

We passed through a clump of boats fishing with the strange looking nets already described. The yacht was kept close-hauled on the starboard tack till 1 p.m., by which time the tide was calculated to be running to the N. It was a bright fresh day, with nothing that one would have altered except the direction of the wind. When we put about, the land was concealed in fog, but, in time, we sighted Cape Prior, weathered it at 4 p.m. and at 5.30 p.m. made the land off Mount Campelo, five miles E. of Cape Prior.

Thereafter short boards were made along the land with water smooth and wind fairly strong. The weather was thick, and little of the shore could be seen. The sun went down in a dense bank of haze. Gathering clouds in the N.W. cheered us with the hope of a coming breeze from that quarter. Barometer at 8 p.m. 30.55. Darkness fell early and not a glimpse could be caught of land or of light. At 9 p.m., afraid of the shore, we allowed the yacht to dodge off to sea on the starboard tack. She headed N.N.W., but afterwards came up to N. by E.

*Thursday, August 25.* Till 3 a.m. the yacht was kept on the starboard tack. But it would be tedious to give, in detail, the directions and distances of our four days of working almost dead to windward, nor would any reader derive either interest or information from a

minutely related account. We crossed the Bay in safety by dead reckoning, without any aid from scientific navigation. Duncan had pressed upon us the loan of his chronometer, but I refused to undertake the responsibility of the charge, and he might very well want it himself before the end of his trip. The calculation of our longitude was, therefore, out of our power. On no day was it possible, either because of cloudy sky or of fog-laden horizon, to take a meridian altitude. The fact caused little concern. Owing to defective eyesight, I find great difficulty in using a sextant, and, when the angle has been found, it can be read only by the desperate straining of my one working eye.

Knowledge of latitude alone is of no very great service. On the chart was carefully plotted the course and distance of every board made, without allowance for variation, deviation, leeway, or tide. In the happy issue, it was found that the various errors had counter-balanced each other in a truly marvellous manner.

At daylight fog concealed the land, and we saw no more of Spain. At 7 a.m. the yacht was calculated to be in Lat.  $44^{\circ} 4' 0''$  N., and Long.  $7^{\circ} 54' 0''$  W., 18 miles N. by E. of Cape Ortegal. Barometer 30.56. The log was streamed. The day was fine, but hazy, and the sea was remarkably smooth. The wind, very light, hovered about the neighbourhood of N.E. At noon our position was Lat.  $44^{\circ} 16' 25''$  N., Long.  $8^{\circ} 1' 35''$  W. 30 miles from Cape Ortegal. Log 33. The yacht was tacked several times during the afternoon and evening to take advantage of slight shifts in the wind.

A huge monster of the whale, or porpoise, tribe accompanied the yacht, for a time, at a distance of 30 feet. It kept dipping and rising, but resembled neither in shape. The gambols of leviathans of the deep, seen from the deck of a liner, are amusing to watch; seen

from the cockpit of the *Winnie*, they are much too impressive to be in the least entertaining. I was greatly relieved when this specimen forged slowly ahead without showing the smallest inclination to examine the yacht.

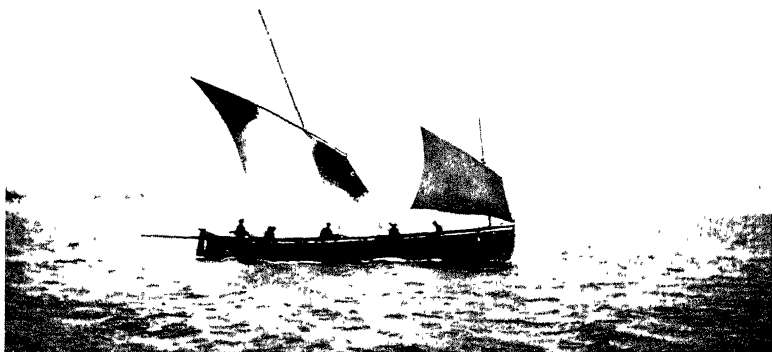
At 5 p.m. we were 45 miles due N. of Cape Ortegal, but many miles W. of the direct line to Ushant. At midnight, barometer 30.61, log. 46, Lat.  $44^{\circ} 43' 30''$  N., Long.  $8^{\circ} 20' 10''$  W.

*Friday, August 26.* At midnight we were crossing the track of several steamboats, heading N.E. and S.W. The wind, N.E., was light all the hours of darkness, and, as daylight approached, it fell lighter still. Barometer 30.62. For a couple of hours there was a heavy drizzle. Thereafter the sun came out hot, and we had a hazy, windless day. In five hours the log registered only six miles. Position at noon, Lat.  $45^{\circ} 1' 20''$  N., Long.  $8^{\circ} 19' 0''$  W. 78 miles N. of Ortegal. Log 67. Barometer inclined to fall.

The afternoon was spent in making short boards in a faint breeze. From time to time our hearts were cheered by the wind's working so far S. of E. that the yacht's head came up to N.E. by E., the course to Ushant from our present position. But she never maintained this bearing for long. The lashing of the light-boards had gone all adrift. We had used up every inch of marlin, and could find no string on board with which to relash them to the shrouds. We carried the riding-light in the cockpit ready to show, a very necessary precaution on account of the number of steamboats that met or overtook the yacht. On the outward voyage, between the Raz and Ribadeo, only two vessels had been sighted; on our homeward passage, right in the steamboat track, we were pestered by the too close attentions of an almost unbroken line.

At midnight, barometer 30.59. Log 94. Lat.  $45^{\circ}$





Spanish lancha in a stiff breeze ("Across the Bay").



Fishing boats, North Coast of Spain ("Across the Bay").

*[To face page 218.]*

17' 20" N., Long. 8° 12' 10" W. 114 miles from Ortegal.

*Saturday, August 27.* Several times during the night it was necessary to show our light to warn steamboats off. The sea remained quite smooth. At daylight a heavy drizzle began. It cleared off in time, but not once, throughout the day, did the sun succeed in piercing the canopy of cloud. Barometer 30.5. For some hours the yacht pointed N.E. by N. and N.E., which was near enough to her course to be encouraging.

At noon, log 125. Lat. 45° 47' 25" N., Long. 7° 54' 0" W. Distance from Ortegal 122 miles.

Though our progress was so slow, we enjoyed every moment of our struggle with adverse conditions. The fine weather allowed us all the sleep demanded by nature, and there were no hardships of any kind to be endured. Our only anxiety was connected with our rapidly disappearing store of tobacco, and we foresaw, with dismay, the approaching need of strictly rationing our daily consumption.

About 5 p.m. a transient brightening of the sky ahead showed the white sails of a vessel running down before the wind. She was soon lost to view in the smear of a rain-squall. When that was past, she hove in sight once more, only to disappear quickly in further rainfall. The next time she was sighted, she was recognized as a French tunny-boat, the only craft under canvas to gladden our eyes since our departure from Spain. She rounded to half a mile under our stern, checked her sheets, and went off towards the N.

Just before dark the wind breezed up suddenly from S.S.E. Joyously we slacked away our sheets. But our joy was quickly damped. The wind soon returned to E. by N., and the yacht, on a tight pinch, was heading only N.N.E. The cloud effects were very startling.

To the W. the sky was covered with a dense mass of inky blackness; in all other directions, isolated clouds were spouting their contents upon the indifferent ocean. A N. undulation was beginning to make itself felt.

At midnight, barometer 30.48. Lat.  $46^{\circ} 15' 0''$  N., Long.  $7^{\circ} 48' 30''$  W. From Ortegal 148 miles.

*Sunday, August 28.* A night of almost unbroken calm with heavy rain at short intervals. Coming on deck at 5 a.m. I found Fife suffering from strange excitement and gazing wildly around. He declared that, only a short time before, he had heard a cock crow and a ship's bell strike two. There was no vessel in sight within the limited radius of our vision, and it cannot be doubted that my mate was under the spell of a foolish illusion. Barometer 30.38. Heavy rain came down and lasted till 10 a.m. The tunny-boat, sighted yesterday, dragged slowly across our bows. There was a faint air from N.E. The yacht, on the port tack, headed E. by S., but the log disdained to take any notice of her progress.

At noon, log 187. Lat.  $46^{\circ} 19' 30''$  N., Long.  $7^{\circ} 44' 0''$  W. From Ortegal 150, from Ushant 156 miles.

For hours we sweltered in a humid heat, and, very gloomily, returned to the question of rationing our tobacco. At 1 a.m. a breathless calm prevailed, and we lunched together below, leaving the yacht to amuse herself. A lull in the gentle slatting of the canvas attracted my attention. Thrusting my head up the hatchway, I found a faint draught blowing from N. Though as yet we knew it not, our luck had changed. We were to be blessed with a fair wind all the rest of the way home. The yacht's head was brought to N.E. by E. The wind grew gradually stronger, and worked to N.W. Soon we had the pleasure to see streaming astern a well-defined wake.

In the evening right ahead a tunny-boat was sighted, approaching under a cloud of light-weather canvas. At 7 p.m. Fife was in charge, while, below, I was busy plotting out our position. A cry of dismay startled me from my work. Before I could reach the deck to learn the reason of his cry, Fife put the tiller down, and exclaimed with a sigh of relief: "All right—all clear!"

We passed clear—but only just clear—of the tunny-boat. The *patron* was excusably angry. He danced up and down his deck in the wildest excitement, and, with eloquent gestures, gave his candid opinion of our careless seamanship. I slipped below. Fife was in fault, and it was only fair that he should endure the brunt of the abuse. The trouble was caused by his attempting, at the same time, to look after the ship and to change the films of his camera. With one eye on the compass card and the other on the camera, he had nothing left to bestow on the tunny-boat, whose near approach had escaped his recollection. After the angry fisherman had passed out of hearing, he murmured in the tone of a flagellated schoolboy: "By Jove, skipper, I've had a lesson I shall never forget!"

The early hours of the night were very dark, and we were harassed by a line of steamboats coming down upon the yacht from directly ahead. No sooner were we clear of one than another appeared. The riding-light was in constant demand, and we had, repeatedly, periods of acute anxiety. The busy traffic across the Bay is, no doubt, explicable, but was very surprising to us who had lately observed the lonely spaces that distinguish our own home waters. Fife, unable to sleep, either because he had slept himself out during the course of the day, or because his nerves were rattled by his adventure with the tunny-boat, turned out at 11.30 p.m. and insisted

upon taking the tiller half-an-hour before his time below had expired.

At midnight, wind W.N.W. Barometer 30.35, log 213, Lat.  $46^{\circ} 54' 30''$  N., Long.  $6^{\circ} 20' 35''$  W. From Ortegal 190, Ushant 111 miles.

*Monday, August 29.* The wind blew steadily and, though the sea gradually made, the yacht ran on quietly without wetting her decks. Nothing occurred before daylight to break the pleasant monotony of our satisfactory progress. At 5.30 a.m. Fife discovered land, broad on our starboard beam, and refused to accept my shouted assurance that the nearest land in an E. direction was 200 miles away. He insisted upon my turning out to look at an island clearly in sight, topped by houses and the steeple of a church. He could scarcely be persuaded that what he saw was only cloud lighted from behind by the low-lying sun. The yacht, by this time, was very lively, and the preparation of breakfast proved singularly trying to the temper. The capsizing of a full teapot transcends every known form of provocation to the use of violent language. All the morning we ran on without check, driven by a fine N.W. wind. The sky was cloudy and the air chilly.

At noon, barometer 30.4, log 260, Lat.  $47^{\circ} 37' 0''$  N., Long.  $6^{\circ} 1' 20''$  W. Distance from Ortegal 243, from Ushant 60 miles.

At 2 p.m. the wind suddenly fell light, and we were greatly troubled in our spirits lest a calm should be coming, but the wind soon returned, and blew from W.N.W. Throughout the afternoon, with an assiduity that survived every disappointment, Fife detected the loom of land, and was not easily convinced that the Iles de Sein, 25 to 30 miles under our lee, lying low, were far beyond our ken. The sun came out, and the wind piped up into a breeze that was fully as strong as we wanted,

even with a reef in the mainsail. Anticipating the likelihood of a breezy night, at 7 p.m. we hove to for a few moments to pump the ship dry, and, having removed the little water that was on board, brought her head back once more to N.E. by E.

Unless my plotting was seriously awry, we might well expect, when darkness fell, to catch on the sky the glare of the Crac'h light. Visibility seemed to be good. Our hearts were throbbing with the stimulus of suppressed excitement, and night appeared to be unusually slow in its coming. At 8.30 p.m. precisely Fife gave a triumphant yell.

"I've got it! Two flashes, isn't it? There you are, on starboard bow, nearly right ahead!"

My sight, less keen than his, was unable for a while to pick up the light. But when darkness grew more pronounced, I saw the double flash sweeping across the sky. Crac'h light, once seen, can never be mistaken. The sheets were checked, and the yacht's head put N.N.E. on her course for the Lizard.

The light, by my reckoning, was 20 miles away; by appearance, at least 30. The log reading was 303 miles. From Ushant to Ortegal the distance is 300 miles. When the log was streamed, the yacht was 18 miles N. of Ortegal. She was now 30 miles short of Ushant. This allowed about 50 miles to cover divagations from the direct route. The log had recorded the yacht's progress with remarkable accuracy.

Even more surprising than the accuracy of the log was the success of our rough and ready navigation. No doubt had assailed my mind but that we should fetch without fail the neighbourhood of Ushant, but to pick up the light flashing just over the bowsprit's end was a result entirely unlooked for. Fife hazarded the conjecture that my sight might be poor, but that my

nose was a marvel, for it had, so far as he could understand, smelt out the road. We were a cheery pair of vagabonds.

Nor was our cheerfulness seriously diminished by the heaviness of the sea and the contrariness of the wind. I dozed off to the accompaniment of an occasional flap of the staysail, as the yacht came into the wind, and of the repeated thud of the blow from the water tumbling on board. Turning out at midnight, in answer to Fife's hail, I found a beautiful night, a quiet sea and a steady breeze from N.W. Barometer 30.42. We forgot to read the log, and position, in any case, could not be plotted for lack of a chart to plot it upon.

*Tuesday, August 30.* Till 3 a.m. the yacht made good progress, usually on her course, at times, somewhat E. of it. The sweeping flash of the Crac'h light remained visible over the starboard quarter, till the mightier light of the sun brought about the extinction of the lesser luminary. The wind gradually sank, and from 5 a.m. for four hours dead calm held the yacht in unkind bondage. The night had been bitterly cold, and Fife, with chattering teeth, maintained that the thermometer had fallen far below freezing point. The sun rose clear as a bell, and soon with his rays drove from the atmosphere any hint of chilliness. Barometer 30.56. At 9.30 a.m. there came from E. a breeze sufficiently strong to give steerage way once more to the yacht.

At noon I was astonished to sight ahead, through a thin veiling of mist, the bold outline of the Lizard. It was incredible that the yacht had outrun my reckonings so far as to have the land near enough to be seen. On the other hand, it was hard to disbelieve the evidence of my eyes. Not only could the point be recognized, but also the lighthouse and the houses on the top showed dimly through the haze. So clear was the vision that,

for a few moments, the yacht's head was brought a point further E. to weather the land. But common sense recovered its sway, and she was brought back to her course. The visionary point could be only a phantasm produced by fog and a distempered imagination.

Fife was sleeping quietly below, but at 1.30 p.m., desirous of hunting through our thinning stores for something with which to satisfy our hunger, I roused him to take the tiller, and pointed ahead to the phantom of the Lizard. After a glance he muttered: "Cloud," thereby inflicting a severe disappointment, for, after yesterday's proofs of a prolific fancy, I expected him to go into raptures over the totally premature discovery of land. Many a time in the past had my eyes been mocked by illusory apparitions, but never before by a wraith so strikingly mantled in the garb of reality. During lunch we passed through the middle of a fleet of smacks working to windward. They were French, bound from Scilly or Newlyn to Camaret or Brest.

All the afternoon and early evening the wind blew from S.E. with the regular gentleness of an infant's breathing. At 7 p.m. it slightly increased its strength. An hour later, by my dead reckoning, the Lizard was distant only 20 miles, and, as darkness began to fall, we gazed with eager eyes ahead to detect the reflection of its light. Fife's childlike faith in my navigation received a mischievous shock. A promise had been made of a sight of the light at nightfall. Nightfall was here and no light was to be seen.

When, at 8.45 p.m., I was eating some supper below, and making ready to take first trick at the tiller, a joyful shout from Fife announced the discovery of the missing light. "Here you are—right ahead! Skipper, you old divil, how do you do it? You *must* be able to smell your way." His undeserved admiration was laughably



amusing. What simplicity such a highly developed nose would give to many a cruiser's diffident navigation ! From 9 p.m. to midnight a S.E. wind blew with gentle steadiness. Barometer 30.54.

*Wednesday, August 31.* The breeze blew only softly, and it was 5.30 a.m. before Fife passed the Lizard, some distance to the eastward. In his fear of the Manacles, he ran the yacht so far away that, at 7 p.m., the Dodman was ahead. This aberration added some hours to the duration of the voyage, but, with a good breeze from S., was not in itself a mistake of much importance. The yacht's head was shifted to N. by W. direct for Falmouth harbour. Barometer 30.52. Heavy rain came, and the wind worked to S.S.W. The rain soon ceased, but the day remained dull.

We ran contentedly on, already throwing retrospective glances upon the incidents of the passage. At noon, with red ensign flying at the truck, we dropped the anchor off Jackett's yard, seven days seven hours from Coruña. The voyage was finished, but both of us wished that it was only now beginning. Supplies were running short, but tobacco held out to the very end. Fife protested that he had lost a stone in weight. If he had, he looked none the worse for his loss.

It is not often that our ensign attracts the attention of the custom-house, but, on this occasion, about 6 p.m., while Fife was shaving and I was making a somewhat hopeless search in my bag for clothes of reasonable respectability in which to face the inmates of the Green Bank Hotel, a launch shot alongside and the revenue officers stepped on board. The visit was purely formal, and a clearance was given without the smallest examination. We treated the chief and his engineer to a tot of Spanish rum. The former was inclined to be facetious, and was terribly embarrassed to discover that bare feet,

ragged trousers, and a questionable shirt are not necessarily inconsistent with the dignity of a skipper.

Our farewell dinner, like all farewell functions, filled our hearts with equal feelings of melancholy and merriment. Fife did not cease to expatiate upon his enjoyment of the cruise. The loss of the rudder, however pleasant the thrill of recalling the mishap, reduced him at the time to the frame of mind of the bishop who consulted the captain about the ship's chances of weathering a gale :

And he said, " Well, your grace, it's a dirtyish night,  
But whether the vessel will ride,  
I really can't tell you ; we'll know before light ;  
In providence we must confide."

" Good gracious ! " the Bishop exclaimed in dismay,  
As he clutched at his old shovel hat,  
" This is terrible, skipper ! You don't mean to say  
That really it has come to *that* ! "

LAYS OF IND.

Our delay at Ribadeo, though deadly for Duncan, he regarded, personally, as an unmixed blessing, for he saw more of Spain and the real Spanish during those few days than he could have done by a prolonged stay at Coruña.

Ignoring the march of the years and the changes they bring in their train, we arranged on his next leave to sail away in search of the Hesperides, or some other goal equally difficult of attainment. Alas ! in four years' time it is probable that his skipper, even if he is still alive, will have descended to the stage of the slippered pantaloon and be no longer able to fare forth upon the waters, however insistent their call may still remain. The next day Fife took train to set about his necessary arrangements, and started for India's sunny clime September 16.

This was one of the best of the *Winnie's* cruises. The

outward voyage was exciting enough to be a pleasant memory for the remainder of our days, and the fine weather of the passage home made almost every hour an unmixed delight. Many good cruisers find life merely monotonous without something in sight besides the sea to attract their attention, but there are others who have learnt to appreciate to the full the truth and beauty of the line :

There's a magic in the distance where the sea-line meets the sky.

NOYES.

WEST AND BY SOUTH

# WEST AND BY SOUTH\*

1922

## I

### “THE BRIGHT EYES OF DANGER”

Your course securely steer  
West and by south forth keep!  
Rocks, lee shore nor shoals  
When Aeolus scowls  
You need not fear;  
So absolute the deep.

DRAYTON.

IN August, 1921, C. F. Duncan crossed to Spain in the *Winnie* to join his yacht *Sirius*, lying at Coruña, and to make another stage in his contemplated circumnavigation of the whole sea-board of the Iberian peninsula.

Despite the hardships and adventures of the passage, and the curtailment of his own plans through the *Winnie's* late arrival at Coruña, he was pleased, in 1922, to accept my offer to convey him, with his mate and stores, to Vigo, where he had been obliged to conclude his wanderings, and, all too soon, to leave his boat once more in foreign quarters.

On our return to Falmouth, July 7, from a trip to Scotland, the *Winnie* was handed over to Jackett to receive the extensive refit that the coming voyage demanded. A new bowsprit replaced the spar lost in a

\* Our course was not, precisely, W. by S., but it was near enough to justify the title printed above.

short gale encountered off the Irish coast, and Prior made a jib-headed mizen to be substituted for the old sail, which in a recent blow had shown signs of incipient weakness. In many yawls this sail is little better than a tiresome ornament, but, deprived of her mizen, the *Winnie* close-hauled, especially under short canvas, changes her usually placid temper for a pig-headed perversity, which breaks the heart of her helmsman, and makes a turn to windward a shockingly slow and tedious business.

Standing and running rigging was closely overhauled and renewed where mistrusted; her water-tank was cleaned and coated with cement; a semi-rotary pump was installed at the after end of the cabin, and the light-boards fastened to the shrouds by ingenious clips. A recent experience had clearly demonstrated that a deck-pump, however effective in smooth water, can in heavy weather be a source of dangerous exhaustion, and we were thoroughly weary of the almost daily need to replace the chafed strands of the marlin that lashed the light-boards in their places on the shrouds. Finally, the yacht was put ashore for a scrub and the touching-up of the composition on her bottom. Forty fathoms of new  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inch coir rope was added to her equipment, and a second-hand anchor of goodly proportions took the place of a kedge we had lost at Lawrenny.

J. H. Von Haast, my mate in the northern cruise, was not only able to retain his post, but also eager to adventure forth upon a voyage to more genial climes. He was a young man who possessed all the characteristics that go to the making of a good mate, and if, at times, in Shakespeare's words, he drew out the threads of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument, his seniors remembered that youth will be served, and that they, too, in the long ago were ready, at a moment's

notice, to expound new theories or to controvert established facts.

Duncan proved unsuccessful in his search for a companion, and, at almost the last moment, it was arranged that, having crossed to Vigo in the *Winnie*, we should tranship in a body to the *Sirius*, and continue the voyage southward in her as far as time and circumstance allowed. V. H. was delighted with the plan, and Duncan had so often come to my assistance at personal inconvenience that I acquiesced in the arrangement with becoming cheerfulness.

But, though it was easy to foresee an interesting and, possibly, an adventurous cruise along the unknown shores of Portugal, my enthusiasm was largely tempered by anxiety about the safety of the *Winnie*, left for an indefinite period under the protection of an unknown Spaniard of certain indifference and of doubtful probity, and by the thought that, making the return passage late in September, we might find the Bay of Biscay in a mood to demonstrate that not without reason had it been dubbed the bay of storms. However, the love of adventure, and a desire to help a good friend, speedily snuffed out the scruples of circumspect caution.

An interview was sought with the Spanish vice-consul to enquire whether it was really necessary to incur the expense of obtaining from the port doctor a certificate that the yacht was not infested with plague-carrying rats. He replied that the order, issued two years before, had not, to his knowledge, been rescinded, but he thought that by this time it had, not improbably, fallen into desuetude, and that to set forth without the certificate involved no great risk of vexatious complications. An Englishman of forty years' residence in Spain, the vice-consul had no illusions about the foibles of Spanish officials, and gave us all the assistance that lay within

his power. Everything, he hinted, hinged upon the character of the men we encountered, and upon our treatment of them.

"There is a wide-spread idea," I began, "that the Spanish custom-house does not disdain a bribe, but——"

"Only if offered with discretion!"

The quaint proviso so took me aback that I forgot to complete my sentence, which was to the effect that we had never ourselves in Spain been the victims of unwarranted extortion. His considered view appeared to be that, if we spoke Spanish, the certificate was not a document of pressing importance. As, however, our knowledge of the language was small, and our power of speaking it even less, a visit was paid to the port doctor, who, on learning that the *Winnie* was a yacht unencumbered with cargo, wrote the necessary certificate without inspecting the ship. The vice-consul endorsed the custom house bill of health, and, at a charge of 12s. 6d., handed over the other papers which authorized the entrance of the *Winnie* into the port of Vigo.

When, a few days before the date fixed for departure, our transshipment to the *Sirius* was hurriedly arranged, it was necessary in all haste to set about securing for our passports the Portuguese *visa*. They were dispatched to London to Thomas Cook and Son, with a cheque to pay expenses, and an earnest appeal to put the business through with the briefest possible delay. We were delighted to receive them back with unhoped-for expedition, but our delight was abruptly changed to chagrin when, on opening the envelope, we found our passports returned untouched, with the explanation that no steps could be taken to further our wishes till the questions on enclosed forms had been answered, and a couple of photographs of each were supplied. No



explanation was vouchsafed as to why Portugal was not, like other countries, contented with the photograph already affixed to our respective passports.

Many of the questions were difficult to answer off-hand, but what we did not know we shamelessly invented. The provision of the photos was easy for V. H., for he carried in his pocket-book several of the half-dozen recently taken for passport purposes, but my own pocket-book was not similarly furnished, and the possibility of securing fresh copies of my portrait at a moment's notice was extremely unlikely.

However, to leave no chance untried, on the following morning early, I begged various professional photographers in the town to grant me an immediate sitting, and to develop and print two copies before the hour of the evening post. But a deaf ear was everywhere turned to my petition. Such speed was foreign to easy-going tradition. The day was Friday, and it was a matter of the utmost importance to ensure the delivery in London of photographs and papers before Sunday came to delay for twenty-four hours the transit of urgent dispatches. On the completion of my fruitless round I returned to the yacht, cross as a bear with a wounded head, and hopeless of obtaining the speedy presentment of my guileless visage.

In the middle of our strictures on the unreasonableness of the Portuguese and on the dilatoriness of photographers, Mr. Harley Mead, the yacht designer, luckily paid us a passing visit. Informed of our dilemma, he declared his firm belief that, if a snapshot were handed in at once, the chemists, Wilmer and Hocking, would accomplish the work in the available time. V. H. promptly snapshotted me seated upon an upturned bucket, and the chemists, either moved by my pathetic entreaties or wheedled by V. H.'s silvery tongue, promised to have two copies of the

negative ready by the late afternoon. And honourably they fulfilled their promise. We breathed a sigh of relief when our papers were dropped into the letter-box in ample time for the evening post.

V. H., though he repudiated any claim to be an expert photographer, was greatly delighted by the result of his last effort with the camera.

"True to life, skipper," he said, "absolutely tophole! Never saw a better photo!"

Though little troubled by personal vanity, I was inclined to dispute his verdict. It was true that every line, every defect, had been reproduced with painful fidelity, but——!

"All photos taken of late years represent me as an elderly man of placid and benign aspect—but that face of a battered pirate, with the lust of murder in his eyes!"

"That's the beauty of it!" chuckled V. H., "you looked savage enough to frighten the devil himself to a safe distance!"

Such are the shrewd blows that ingenuous youth unconsciously inflicts upon the smug complacency of advancing years. Destroyed for ever was the fond conceit that the smouldering fires of an inflammable temper were successfully concealed beneath a mask of impassivity.

The weather of July was singularly unpropitious, and exceedingly unpromising for our approaching trip. Strong winds with heavy rain were almost our daily portion. Caught in the open sea on the 6th, the yacht had safely weathered a bitter gale, and on the 8th she rode out in port another of almost equal ferocity. We had arranged to dine luxuriously at the Green Bank Hotel, but landing was impossible, even if we had cared to leave the yacht. The quiet waters of the harbour were lashed into breaking seas, and little rest was granted us till daylight, when the

wind lulled in a measure and the sea quickly subsided. By a happy chance we were lying in a clear berth, with no near neighbours to windward to drag down upon the yacht, nor others close astern for her to foul, if she were set driving by the violence of the wind.

As V. H. had brought on board a newly cleaned and regulated chronometer, Duncan was glad to leave his own at home, for railway travelling is detrimental to the equilibrium of delicate mechanism, and there was no need to saddle ourselves with a two-fold responsibility. With the original error of his instrument V. H. was, of course, acquainted, but about its daily rate, in spite of untiring perseverance, a conclusive decision proved impossible to reach.

Greenwich time comes through twice a day to the post office at Falmouth, but, as an enquirer is not allowed to be present in the room to which it is signalled, but is obliged to trust to the word of a clerk busily engaged in an outer office, absolute accuracy is, naturally, unattainable, and the rate of the chronometer showed, from day to day, apparently the wildest variation. The attendance of V. H. at the office was so regular that, at last, the clerks resented his presence, and enquired with asperity whether he was a resident in the town or came from a ship at anchor in the roads. On his explaining politely that he came from a yacht shortly starting for Spain, and was anxious to ascertain the rate of the chronometer, he was asked :

“ Oh, are you one of the crew of the *Winnie* ? ”

V. H. nodded an affirmative, but was too startled to seek the source of the speaker's knowledge of our intentions.

We were informed that the time-ball on Pendennis had been done away with to save expense. Its discontinuance, if the information is correct, is an instance of

the paltriest economy. In steamboats fitted with wireless it is easy to check a chronometer's movements, but there must still be many vessels sailing from Falmouth, to the officers of which a dependable time-signal would be a boon of inestimable value.

Duncan arrived on the evening of July 24. He was very depressed about our passports, and asserted, with morose confidence, that a week would elapse before they were returned to the yacht. But they came the following afternoon, and we blessed the firm of Thos. Cook and Son. Long may it produce passports and ease the difficulties of inexperienced travellers! A barometer of proved trustworthiness, brought by Duncan for the voyage, was substituted for what he was pleased to call the unreliable toy, to which, hitherto, we had pinned our easy faith.

*Wednesday, July 26.* Wind S.W., strong, barometer 30.23. Some final details of shopping received attention, and then, unwilling to allow the chill of hesitation to nip the opening blossom of adventure, we started at 1 p.m., under double-reefed canvas, with a faint hope of finding outside weather better than we had reason to anticipate. One glance was enough. Without delay we worked into Helford river. Any sense of depression at an inauspicious start was lightened by the recollection that, on each of our previous visits to Spain, the *Winnie*, at the outset of the voyage, had been driven for shelter into Helford river. The evening was even more miserable, wet, and stormy, than the afternoon had been. Barometer 30.18.

*Thursday, July 27.* Calm morning; later, N. draught. Barometer 30.22. When we started at 9 a.m. there was a gentle breeze N.E., which soon worked to S.E. and set us beating out of the river over a strong ebb-tide. We luxuriated in the warmest day we had enjoyed for many

a week. No suspicion of the immediate calamity, which was coming with the unexpectedness of a bolt from the blue, ruffled the calmness of our spirits. With scarcely a breath of wind in her sails, the yacht was, at last, in a position to head straight out to sea on the starboard tack. The topsail was pulled out of its bag, and the task was taken in hand of lacing it to the yard. The work was abruptly interrupted by a startling bump on the keel of the yacht.

Breathlessly astounded, I jumped to my feet, and cast around a glance of flurried enquiry.

"Hullo! what's that?" asked Duncan from the tiller.

"The Gedges!" was my grim reply.

Between the points of Mawnan and Rosemullion the Gedges lie, an extensive reef, a trap for strangers, and, as in our own case, a danger not always avoided by visitors who are well acquainted with the approaches to the river.

Our minds, but a moment before filled with a sense of ease and confidence, were now sorely tortured by tremors of nervous apprehension. It was easy to foresee that, in spite of the present tranquillity of the weather, the result of the stranding might easily be the wreck of the yacht.

The canvas was hastily lowered, and with our spare spars we strove, with prodigal expenditure of strength, to pole the yacht from off the rock upon which she had been caught. Not the faintest glimmer of success rewarded our exertions. It was soon discovered that she was lodged on the side of a ridge and near the top. To starboard, the water was comparatively deep; to port, the rock rose almost to the surface of the water. There was not a breath of wind, and the sea was barely moved by the gentlest undulation, but, as the tide fell, the yacht

began to sway to and fro with rolls so deep and sudden that she dipped her rail repeatedly, and all but hurled us headlong from the deck.

Passing motor boats were appealed to for assistance. The men on the first were unable to manœuvre their charge near enough to catch the end of a rope. Another came up, bow on, at right angles to our broadside, and the crew made the line we flung fast to the bitts forward, and, though begged to try and pull us off astern, were hopelessly puzzled as to how to set about the operation. After a few moments our line was cast off and the boat withdrawn. A third hung off and on, at a convenient distance for a pompous individual, standing in the stern-sheets, to harass us with unprofitable warning. "Get a move on!" he cried. "If you waste more time, the boat will fall over and break up. Hurry up! Get on with it!"

We were busy, at the moment, in launching the dinghy to take away the kedge. A very heavy roll floated the boat prematurely, and nearly floated us off in its company. "You ought to keep Rosemullion open of Penare—no, no, I mean, Penare open of Rosemullion—" continued the voice from the motor boat. "Set your canvas! Do something quick! The tide is falling fast, and if you don't take care, you'll lose the boat."

We were profoundly impressed by the imminence of our danger, and his words served only to irritate the raw edge of anxiety. Suspending for a moment my activity I shouted, in uncontrollable wrath:

"For heaven's sake, take that silly old blighter away, or stuff a wet towel down his throat to stop his confounded yapping!"

My words were unseemly, but they had a proper effect, for the boat, moving away, carried out of ear-shot our obnoxious tormentor. Nothing more surely rouses angry

passion in the hearts of men engaged in a losing struggle than the unsought comments of a self-constituted critic.

A moment later the *Winnie* found her own salvation, unaided by our exertions.

We had lowered the kedge into a shore boat, manned by a hand at the oars and a gentleman fisherman seated in the stern, which, passing at the moment, volunteered to take away our anchor. The man rowed only a few yards when he exclaimed :

“ The yacht’s afloat, sir ! ”

Nor was the exclamation unwarranted. Loosened, no doubt, by the heavy rolling, the yacht had slipped off the side of the ridge, and was now lying at rest in about eight feet of water. The heads of rocks were beginning to show all round, but a gully leading seaward seemed to offer a chance of escape. Along this, towed by the boat, the yacht advanced a few yards, but soon, taking the ground again, she remained immovably fixed. Nothing further could be done till she was floated by the returning tide.

The man dropped our kedge in deep water. His will was good, his skill poor. He managed to foul the anchor as he let it go. However, he had been of real assistance, and was suitably rewarded. His employer, offered refreshment, accepted with alacrity, and polished off two stiff pegs of whisky in record time. We did not offer a third, being fearful of his acceptance. He had a thirst, that man ! If his skill in fishing was comparable with his powers of suction, he occupied no back seat in the brotherhood of anglers.

The boatman endeavoured to solace our distress by remarking, as he rowed away, that, whatever happened, we were now in a better berth than the one we had originally occupied. His statement was perfectly true, even

if it did little to allay our poignant anxiety. Had the yacht remained on the side of the ridge, her deck by low water would have fallen below the level of the keel, in which case the returning tide could not fail to fill her full and compass her complete destruction. As it was, when the water fell, she settled down quietly on her port broadside upon a level bottom of rock, thickly carpeted by a rank growth of sea-weed. The boats that had crowded round, filled with interested spectators, seeking their own safety, left us to contemplate in loneliness our doubtful fate.

Our prospects were not entirely desperate. Provided that the sea maintained its present calmness, we had still a reasonable hope of extricating the yacht undamaged from the imbroglio in which she had been landed by our carelessness. If, on the other hand, any sea made, we had little to look forward to except her total loss. A pathetic object she lay, hemmed in on every side by ugly masses of rock. To be picked up by a sand is, usually, far from pleasant, but a sandbank is a bed of roses compared with the centre of a reef. I had never before been on rocks—except, of course, financial ones!—and found the nastiness of the experience in no way relieved by its novelty.

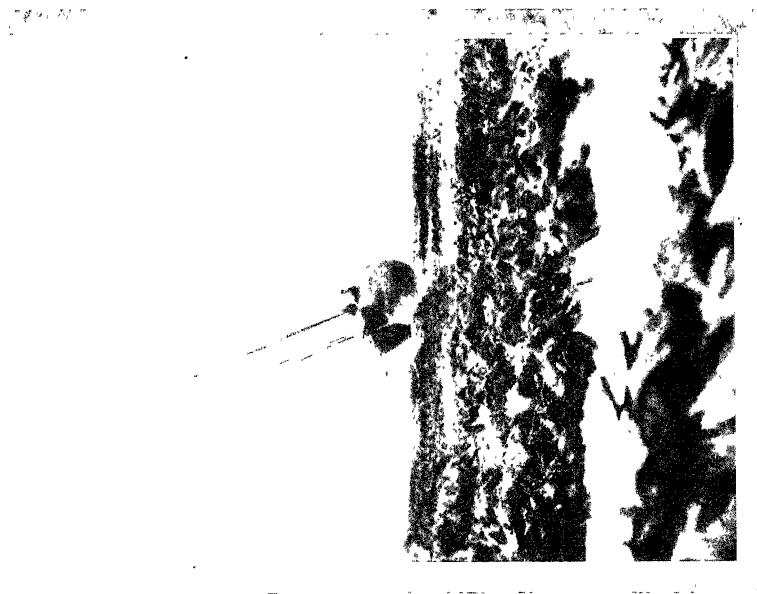
At 11.50 a.m. the yacht went on. Low water was due at 1 p.m., but it was quite half an hour later before the water ceased to trickle towards the sea through the narrow passages between the rocks. An anxious eye was kept upon the weather. Little breaths from various directions frightened us, from time to time, lest they should be the outriders of breezes of greater strength. But they all died down in turn, and the sea remained encouragingly undisturbed.

Duncan could give no explanation of our stranding. A moment or two before the yacht struck he had looked





J. H. Von Haast in the cockpit of his own boat.



"A pathetic object she lay."

[To face page 242.

beneath the boom, and seen that she was, as he supposed, maintaining a course devoid of danger. He could only imagine that the tide, taking charge, had swept her broadside on towards the reef faster than the light wind had driven her ahead towards the open water.

A watched kettle is, proverbially, slow in the boiling : the rising of a watched tide is, undeniably, slower still. Time passed with flagging step, and the water rose by halting inches. It was long before the gullies filled and lifted the weed that clung to the sides of the rocks, longer still before the weeds on their tops waved gently up and down their writhing fronds. While no man can tether time or tide, the wildest impatience is impotent to accelerate their given pace. By slow degrees the jagged points about us disappeared ; by slow degrees the yacht lifted, rose to an even keel, finally floated. At 3.20 p.m. she was hauled off with unexpected ease—an ease that brought an anti-climax to our anxious excitement.

There was at the moment a gentle breeze N.N.E. We set the canvas, and, with some hesitation, ran off in the direction of the Manacles buoy. The deck was littered with the tangled coils of the new warp that had been in use. After slacking it away astern to take out the turns by towing, we set, in painful anxiety, about discovering whether it was safe to proceed upon our voyage forthwith, or whether it was advisable to return to Falmouth for examination and, possibly, repairs. While we did not think that the yacht had suffered grievous hurt, we could scarcely hope that she had escaped entirely uninjured.

We pumped the yacht dry. The quantity of water found on board was decidedly discouraging. Still, the pump had not been used for several days, there had been

heavy rain, and, before the yacht was able to lift her topsides free, a certain amount of infiltration was only to be expected. Consequently, though despondent, we were not utterly cast down. An hour later a brief spell at the pump ejected a few quarts of water. These might be either leakage through the bottom or merely drainage from inside. In better spirits we hoped that the latter was the case. At the end of a further hour the pump was tried again. With a mighty sigh of satisfaction we found that the bilge was still empty, and that, almost miraculously, the yacht had come off with her bottom unholed. Providence had treated us with unmerited kindness.

Before we were assured of the happy issue of our dangerous adventure, we had streamed the log, and taken our departure from the Lizard. Exuberant spirits displaced quaking anxiety. Happy in the knowledge of sound planks beneath our feet, we found a present joy in comparing the respective forebodings which for many hours had forced our courage, unashamedly, to wilt. We remembered, still with wrath, the man who had limited his assistance to inane shouting, and pictured him describing to a circle of bored acquaintances in the smoking-room of his hotel, or, in his own dining-room, to an even more indifferent family, how, by his advice, he had rescued a yacht from the rocks, and what a base return had been made for his expert suggestions.

Through a beautiful evening the yacht, headed S. by W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. to sight Ushant, ran quietly over a tranquil sea, teased only by the movement of a S.W. roll. At midnight the wind was N. by E., light ; log 6 ; barometer 30.33.

*Friday, July 28.* An infant moon had retired early to bed, and the star-spangled sky lighted but little the darkness of the night. The radiance of even a half-

grown moon far outshines the combined lustre of innumerable stars. As an old poet sings :

You meaner beauties of the night,  
That poorly satisfy our eyes  
More by your number than your light :  
You common people of the skies—  
What are you when the moon shall rise ?

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

The faint N. wind was insufficient to keep quiet the canvas shaken by the heavy swell. At 4.30 a.m. the wind worked to N.N.E. and the boom was gybed to starboard. After breakfast the topsail was set. Barometer 30.26. At noon we were, by log 35, by observation 44 miles from the Lizard. When the log was put overboard it was noticed that the spindle was slightly bent, and we were not therefore surprised to find a considerable discrepancy between its reckoning and the distance given by our sights. On the last cruise, caught in a bight of the main sheet, it had been violently uprooted from its plate on the rail, and the damage incurred through this rough treatment had, unfortunately, not been noticed before the present demand was made upon its services.

The wind worked gradually to S.E., but remained too light to afford much assistance. In the early evening it blew with increased strength, but drew so far ahead that the yacht, on the port tack, could do no better than S.W. by S. The sunset was very poor, and before dark the topsail was pulled down. A dark bank rolling up from S.W. could be mistaken for nothing else than fog.

At 9 p.m. barometer 30.22, log 42, wind S. by W., a nice breeze. We decided that Ushant bore S., and, an hour later, on the expected bearing, the double flash of the Crac'h light was caught for a few moments reflected from the gloomy mirror of a heavily clouded sky. At midnight the yacht was put upon the starboard tack,

and, heading S.E. by S., went plunging along with a good breeze in her sails.

The only excitement of the day was caused by a remarkable acrobatic performance on the part of Duncan. He seated himself, carelessly, upon nothing, and fell backwards, head-foremost, through the companion hatchway. His unorthodox method of entering the cabin produced its natural crop of bruises and abrasions, but he did not break his neck, nor, on his recovery from the first shock of surprise, did he emulate the example of the prostrated dustman.

"Mummy," said a little girl, "I saw such a funny thing this morning. When the dustman climbed the little ladder to empty the rubbish into the cart, the horse moved and the ladder slipped and the man fell to the ground with, oh, a terrible bump!"

"Oh, poor man! what happened then?"

"Nothing much 'cos he was *such* a good man. He did not beat the naughty horse; he only sat on the pavement and talked to God!"

*Saturday, July 29.* As time passed, the yacht's head came up gradually to S., but satisfaction on account of improved direction was largely marred by the thick fog which made its unwelcome presence felt. It was my duty to take the tiller at 6 a.m., but Duncan allowed me to lie on undisturbed till 7 a.m., the usual hour to start the stoves and to get the breakfast going. Whether this display of clemency ought to be attributed to mental aberration caused by the shock of yesterday's fall, or to the generous impulse of a kindly heart, or to a deliberate opinion that an extra hour in bed was only the reasonable privilege of the cook, was never definitely decided, but as he was never again guilty of the same foolish self-sacrifice, we were eventually inclined to think that the first of the suggested reasons was, probably, the true

one. Possibly he discovered that the last hour in bed was worth more than all the other hours put together. Nothing but bad weather, or a real emergency, will ever persuade me to forgo the charm of my cot during the brief space that intervenes between the chilly morning watch and the time fixed for the general uprising of the company.

At 8 a.m. barometer 30.16, log 66, wind S.W., light, fog very thick. The yacht's head was kept S., and Ushant was supposed to lie 27 miles dead ahead. Soon the unmelodious music of steamboats' sirens kept us painfully alert. Many passed, unseen but near, but none so closely as to generate alarm.

The yacht's head fell off to S. by E. In the thickness of the moment we could not hope to sight the island till we were almost upon its shores, but we kept our ears wide open to catch from the siren of the Crac'h lighthouse the first intimation of dangerous proximity. Though we had only a vague notion of our actual position, we hesitated to heave to in the track of the endless line of steamboats groping their way to safety in either direction. An undesirable acquaintance at the best of times, a steamboat in a fog is a playfellow to be rigorously shunned.

We were far from happy in our minds about both fog and land when, at 1 p.m., a temporary clearing up allowed us to see that we were in the act of passing Ushant. Stiff point, the N.E. extremity of the island, bore about S.S.W. two miles away. The bearing was surprising, but the discovery ridded our hearts of a crushing load of anxiety.

What was to be done next? Three possible courses offered a doubtful choice. It was open to us to make for L'Aberwrach with a fair wind, or, keeping our course, to find the Four channel and work through it to Camaret,

or to turn on our tracks and beat on stubbornly to windward. L'Aberwrach was far out of our way, the tide was shortly due to run northward through the Four channel, and the present thickness rendered the third choice singularly unattractive. The return of blinding fog forced an immediate decision. The search in thick weather for L'Aberwrach or the Four channel was risky and uncertain. The idea of lying to where we were was dismissed as unwise on account of the nearness of the land and the strength of the tides. A brief spell of vacillation was ended by the determination to return to the open sea, and risk the hazards of passing steamboats.

The fog was marvellously dense and blankly impenetrable by straining eyes. A gentle breeze carried the yacht slowly forward on a W. bearing. The sails hung heavy with saturation, and down the rigging and every rope trickled a stream of moisture. Oilskins availed nothing to keep our clothing dry, and the soaking vapour filled the cabin with all-pervading clamminess. Our unlooked for freedom from steamboat attention was the only spot of brightness in the general gloom.

Just before dusk Stiff point was sighted, for a moment, at a distance of six miles, but it was obliterated again almost as soon as seen, and an inchoate hope that the fog was about to lift was quickly and completely dispelled. At 9 p.m. wind S.S.W., barely perceptible, barometer 30.18. The yacht was kept heading out to sea.

*Sunday, July 30.* The new day brought no change. The yacht moved slowly through an oppressive cloud of palpable blackness. Our spirits had reached a stage of dull resignation when our misery was forgotten in a series of over-thrilling excitements.

At 2 a.m. we were alarmed by hearing the close approach of a big steamboat. The increasing roar of

her siren showed that every minute she was drawing more dangerously near. In the end, she passed, unsighted, closely across our bows. Our nerves were badly rattled ; that they were to be proved by even more searching tests was, fortunately, hidden from our foreknowledge.

After the passing of two uneventful hours we endured a repetition of the same nerve-racking experience. Not till the boat was actually past were we in any way confident of the possibility of escape. We longed for daylight, and daylight delayed its coming.

Sweet Phosphor, bring the day  
Whose conquering ray  
May chase these fogs :  
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day.

QUARLES.

The morning star at length ushered in the light, but the grey cloud of the day was as impenetrable as the black wall of the dark hours. We lay helplessly becalmed. At 8 a.m. barometer 30.08. A faint air N.E., barely strong enough to be detected, quickly abandoned an attempt to assert its power, and there followed an extended period of death-like calm.

At 10 a.m., after much reciprocal hooting, a steamboat passed just clear of the end of the bowsprit. The distinctness with which we heard the ripple at her stem and the chug, chug of her screw thrilled our hearts with paralysing terror, but not even a thickening of the fog betrayed the appalling nearness of the passing ship.

"That's a close call!" we muttered on gradually realizing a reprieve from what appeared to be certain death.

An hour later we had an even narrower escape. Again a steamboat crossed our bows, but at such extremely close quarters that her outline was faintly shadowed through the mist, and we were aware of a ghostly hull gliding slowly by with engines stopped.



"Shave number two!" grunted V. H. "What about number three?"

"Oh, there's luck in odd numbers!" replied Duncan, with a gallant attempt to speak lightly. "Who knows? Perhaps there won't be a third."

But there came a third, and that, too, without delay, and one which relegated our previous escapes, narrow as they had been, to a background of comparative insignificance.

With all our thoughts centred upon the instant peril of our last encounter, we had failed to pay much attention to the warning siren of a vessel coming up on our port beam. Out of the frying-pan into the fire! We recognized in a moment that not only was the stranger near at hand, but that also she was heading directly at the broadside of the yacht. With the energy of despair V.H. worked away at the fog-horn. His unceasing thrust and pull of the plunger produced a raucous dissonance loud enough to awaken the Seven Sleepers. His comrades fidgeted about the deck, tortured by nervous tension and a maddening sense of helplessness. Without a breath of wind to assist, nothing could be done to evade our impending doom.

The vessel's siren roared from high above our heads, and the sound of the slowly thumping screw was brought, momentarily, more clearly to our ears. Surely some listener could not fail to catch the noise of our powerful fog-horn! But nearer stalked the danger, still unchecked. A moment more, and we must see the implacable stem pushing, like a ghastly phantom, through the circumambient fog; a moment more, and the yacht must be cut in twain and her crew, granted that they escaped disablement or death, must be hurled into the water to battle despairingly for dear life.

When the time for decisive action was fully come,

and the only action possible to avoid the impending crash was to leap boldly overboard and endeavour to escape by swimming, the tinkle of an engine-room bell was heard, and the thumping of the propeller ceased abruptly.

Our desperate case was lightened by a gleam of hope. If only the engines had been stopped in time ! In a few seconds the screw began to revolve again, and we easily guessed that the ship was going astern. Then came another stoppage and a longer pause. We supposed that the captain was waiting till the vessel's head swung further round. When the engines were restarted we quickly recognized, by the lessening sound and its changed direction, that the space between the vessel and the yacht was growing wider. An enquiring toot was answered by our responsive horn. The steamboat went off north-eastward, leaving us in dazed stupidity, like men awakened from an evil dream. The open approach of death may be faced with appropriate fortitude, but the stealthy onset of unseen destruction will undermine the *morale* of the stoutest-hearted.

"I don't like this a bit," V. H. complained, as he laid aside the fog-horn. "It puts my wind up ! The game is too exciting to give any enjoyment to the players."

And his seniors freely admitted that, in spite of their longer experience of fogs and the risks that they bring, their nervous systems had suffered the greatest of shocks. The nerves of those who, light-heartedly, confront the unexpectedness of the sea quickly acquire a wonderful firmness, but the rover must be inhumanly callous whose nerves are not apt to falter when his path is beset in the opacity of fog by an uninterrupted succession of unwieldy steamboats.

## II.

### A PLEASANT RUN AND A HAIR-BREADTH 'SCAPE

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone  
And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless bay.  
Four days are sped, but with the fifth anon,  
New shores descried make every bosom gay.

BYRON.

No more steamboats came near us, or, if they did, they passed unheard, and our disordered nerves were granted time to recover their lost tranquillity. After an hour of heavy rain a light air sprang up from N.E., and we rejoiced to see, at length, the gradual dispersal of the fog. For density, duration, and startling incident, this was the worst fog it has ever been my lot to face.

Soon after 1 p.m. the yacht was headed S.W., the direct course to Cape Ortegal. Unusual difficulty attended the setting of the topsail. With no more than the customary trouble it was hoisted most of its journey upwards, but, when we endeavoured to mast-head the yard, the wire halyard jammed, and the sail could neither be hoisted further nor pulled back to the deck. On clambering aloft V. H. found that, owing to the wearing away of the surrounding wood, the halyard had slipped over the edge of the sheave. He succeeded in replacing it, and the sail was set, but we looked forward, with some trepidation, to the time of pulling it down, for there was nothing to prevent the halyard from slipping off the sheave again, and a topsail impossible to lower might easily land us

in an awkward mess. The elimination of the topsail and its unruly yard appears, to my inexperience of the rig, as the sole advantage of the Bermuda sail-plan.

The fog steadily disappeared, but the light wind, nearly dead astern, sent the yacht only slowly ahead. But at 6 p.m. the wind shifted from N.N.E. to N.N.W., and blew with greater vigour. The sea was smooth, scarcely affected by the regular heave of a N.W. roll. The sun, shining forth brightly, allowed sights to be taken, and gave to the dingy canvas of a topsail schooner, working to windward a couple of miles under our lee, a dazzling whiteness against a dark background of lingering fog. She formed as pretty a marine picture as our eyes had ever lighted upon. Even in this mechanical age, a schooner, by her very name, recalls to the old the piratical stories of their youth, and urges poets to commit to verse the fantastic visions of a vivid imagination.

There's a schooner in the offing  
With her topsails set with fire,  
And my heart is gone aboard her  
For the island of Desire.

RICHARD HOVEY.

The evening was fine, though the sky, in places, was darkened by dense isolated masses of evaporating fog. At 9 p.m. barometer 30.13, log 21, wind N.W., fresh, sea still smooth. The reflection on the sky of the Crac'h light, sighted half an hour later, bore N. by E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., and by some juggling with the bearing, the previous sun azimuth, and the navigation tables, Duncan fixed the yacht's position at the moment to be in Lat.  $48^{\circ} 5' 15''$  N. and Long.  $5^{\circ} 41' 30''$  W. Just before dark it was decided to take in the topsail. Contrary to expectation, it came down without a hint of obstinacy.

The end of the day was much more happy than the beginning. The awe-inspiring experiences of the morning were already fading from our inconstant memories.

*Monday, July 31.* At midnight, log 36, wind N.W., fresh. In the darkness the yacht appeared to be racing along. Daylight brought a lighter wind, varying between N.W. and W.N.W. Barometer 30.24. Duncan professed to be worried by his inability to fix upon a more definite point of departure than that obtained by a vague guess at the distance and bearing of Ushant, made when first the yacht began to travel. To start across the Bay without taking a formal departure struck his precise mind as being monstrously irregular. The noon sight made the yacht's position to be Lat.  $47^{\circ} 0' 0''$  N., Long.  $6^{\circ} 11' 0''$  W.

In the afternoon odd tunny-boats were sighted, fishing under sail, and a battle cruiser passed steaming on a N.E. bearing. She showed no ensign, but was supposed to be a Frenchman. At 3.30 p.m. the log recorded its first 100 miles, 15 short of its proper score. After a heavy shower the evening came in clear and warm, and the sunset was good. At 9 p.m. log 124, barometer, steady, 30.24, wind N.W., light. A half moon brightened the surface of the gently heaving water. The sea was wondrously phosphorescent. Our wake gleamed brilliantly, and a line of light marked the trailing log-line to its very end.

*Tuesday, August 1.* Log at midnight 133, but, owing to the paltriness of the wind, its tale of miles at 8 a.m. was only 137. Barometer 30.29. Soon a N.W. breeze began to urge us forward a little faster. A doubtful sight at noon made our Lat.  $45^{\circ} 55' 0''$  N. and our Long.  $7^{\circ} 0' 0''$  W. All day the yacht ran on quietly with every stitch of canvas set, over a sea smooth in itself, but fretted by a heavy N.W. undula-

tion. This big roll made accurate use of the sextant exceedingly difficult, but in the afternoon, by patience and dexterity, Duncan won a good observation for longitude, whence the yacht's position at 5.15 p.m. was deduced to be in Lat.  $45^{\circ} 42' 0''$  N., and Long.  $6^{\circ} 45' 45''$  W., 130 miles from Cape Ortegál.

Early in the evening a tunny-boat was sighted crossing our bows. She was the only craft seen throughout the day. The absence of steamboats was somewhat surprising, for we supposed ourselves to be close to their track. V. H. caused a momentary excitement by sitting down upon my set of teeth, carelessly left lying on a cabin locker. He did them no harm, but expressed a hope that he might have better luck than a friend of his, who, sitting down by accident upon another man's teeth, was badly bitten, and within a fortnight died of hydrophobia!

My teeth—a recent acquisition—were a constant source of mild amusement. They enabled me to hold a pipe with comfort, but, at the near approach of a meal, were quietly slipped from my mouth.

"Are your teeth comfortable?" was asked of a man who had been obliged to submit to the attentions of a dentist.

"Thank you," was the reply, "quite comfortable—in my waistcoat pocket!" His case and mine were closely akin.

At 9 p.m. log 173, barometer 30.32, wind N.N.W., light.

*Wednesday, August 2.* At midnight log 180. The sky was thickly speckled by motionless clouds of fleecy texture, and the wind on the water was light. The roll was gone, and the sea was absolutely smooth, except where it was ruffled by the wild gyrations of schools of tunny-fish. Their bodies, outlined by a phosphorescent

gleam, illuminated the depths in the weirdest fashion, as they darted, like lightning flashes, ahead and astern and beneath the yacht. Duncan expressed a fear that their gambols would spoil the morning sight by blurring the sharpness of the horizon, and V. H., persuaded with difficulty that his light tackle would never hold fish of such agility, even if they condescended to notice a spinning bait, set his inventive faculties to work to devise some novel method of securing an addition to the larder.

Sam Weller called the attention of Mr. Pickwick to the mysterious disappearance of the bodies of dead donkeys: the disappearance of the bodies of dead tunny-fish is no less mysterious. Never have I partaken of the flesh of tunny in France or Spain or Portugal, or even seen its name upon a menu card. What becomes of the big catches that are landed every day by the fishing-boats of these three countries?

At daylight the wind shifted from N.N.W. to N.N.E., but blew gently all the morning. At 8 a.m. barometer 30.33, log 201. Noon position, Lat.  $44^{\circ} 43' 39''$  N., Long.  $6^{\circ} 56' 0''$  W. In the afternoon the wind grew much stronger. Position at 5.20 p.m., Lat.  $44^{\circ} 25' 39''$  N., Long.  $7^{\circ} 9' 0''$  W. The course was changed to S.W. by W. Magnetic courses have been given throughout, though the compass had an error of from a half to three-quarters of a point of E. deviation. Now that we were approaching the Spanish coast, the mind of Duncan, our navigator, grew more and more perturbed.

"A compass with a doubtful error," he grumbled, "a damaged log, and a chronometer with a rate that is merely a matter of conjecture, reduce scientific navigation to a game of glorious guess-work. We may be too far to the E., or too far to the W., or exactly upon our course—I'll be shot if I can tell!" and he

sucked a gloomy pipe, but our confidence in his navigation, even under difficulties, precluded the smallest anxiety about our approaching landfall.

At 6.45 p.m. visibility was remarkably good, and unmistakable land showed up on the port bow. My shout of "Land O!" brought the others headlong to the deck, and, after a brief glance, Duncan remarked in a contented tone, "Not so bad—a few miles too far to the eastward! Thank the Lord, no more sums and doubtful calculations for several weeks!" The course was altered a point further westward to give a fair berth to Estaca, the most northerly cape on the shores of Spain.

The wind, now E., blew hard, and our expectation of its lulling, as night drew nearer, showed no sign of fulfilment. We approached, with open repugnance, the necessary task of stowing the topsail, but, to our untold relief, it was pulled down without serious difficulty. The strong wind soon raised a heavy sea. To windward the weather looked fine, but the sky to the westward portended a change. But threatening signs detracted nothing from our high spirits, for we were safely across the Bay, with the choice of several ports to shelter in, should bad weather render expedient a temporary retirement.

At 9 p.m., barometer 30.26, wind E.S.E., strong, log 245. The yacht was uncommonly sprightly, and all attempts at sleeping in my cot in the fo'c'sle were hopelessly frustrated, partly by my fear of ejection, chiefly by the variety of noises with which the roaring water stunned my ears. A few minutes before midnight Duncan called me forth to consider the propriety of reefing. The sea was short and steep, and the wind, at the moment, disagreeably strong, but the night was clear, the wind, probably, only a passing squall, the



yacht was running reassuringly dry, and we quickly decided, in our desire to waste nothing of the lusty Eurus, though he blew with puffed-out cheeks, to carry on a little longer before we delayed to reef.

*Thursday, August 3.* At midnight, log 261, about 30 miles short of the distance actually crossed. The light on Estaca, 10 miles to the southward, showed up with a brightness that caused some amazement. Twice before had the yacht passed it at night. On the first occasion, the light had shone forth dully, on the second, we had failed to sight it at all, and had rashly concluded that its power was too weak for the importance of the station. But the atmosphere must have been at fault, for we discovered now that there was nothing amiss with the power of the light.

As the wind showed no signs of lulling, it seemed to be only prudent to reef before the weather grew worse. Moreover, under whole canvas the yacht, with her fox-trotting, side-slipping, and nose-diving, prevented the watch below from enjoying a wink of invigorating sleep. She was brought to the wind, two reefs tied down in the mainsail, and the jib rolled up. Reduced canvas immediately increased the comfort of the sleepers below. The mass of high ground that backs Capes Aguillones and Ortegal, though nine miles ahead, was vaguely visible through the transparent darkness. Before 2 a.m. the last was passed, and the yacht, with an easier sea, but still stronger wind, sped on W.S.W. to round the Sisargas islands, a little group 49 miles further down the coast, which makes a trifling extension to a projecting point.

At 3 a.m. the tiller was handed over to V. H., and I stumbled below with heavy eyes and irrepressible yawns. The fo'c'sle was now much quieter, and, without a trace of reluctance, sleep came at once to my call. Though my slumber was sound, it was the sound slumber

of the sea, which leaves a corner of the brain almost fully awake, and absurdly sensible of incidental occurrences. It apprehended from the lessened sound of rushing water that the wind had lulled, from the yacht's steadier motion that the sea had fallen, and was alert enough to draw the happy inference that the weather was improving and that all was well.

This wakeful fraction of the brain was gently slipping into oblivious composure when it was suddenly startled into renewed activity by the consciousness of an unusual commotion on deck, of a heavy gybe, of a jar that sent a shudder through the yacht, of the voice of V. H. shouting excitedly down the hatchway : " I have run into a tunny-boat ! " My eyes refused to open. To my half aroused senses the whole string of ideas appeared superbly ridiculous. A dream, of course ! What whimsical absurdities were imagined in dreams ! I pictured a vain hunt in the morning for a forgotten dream, and, without being thoroughly awakened, dropped back into the deepest slumber.

Repeated shouts broke, at last, the bonds of sleep, and I crept unwillingly from beneath the blankets, and stumbled, with a grievous sense of ill-usage, to the deck. I found the yacht laid-to on the starboard tack, and V. H. telling Duncan an incomprehensible yarn, pointing an accusing finger the while at a steam tunny-boat fast disappearing in the grey of the early morn, and calling to his notice the port bowsprit shroud, which was hanging down in the water owing to a burst lanyard. He was wildly excited, and his incoherent story was difficult to follow. Indeed, it was not till later in the day that he was able to give a lucid account of our extraordinary adventure with the runaway tunny-boat.

The yacht was running with the wind on her quarter, her boom to starboard. About 4.30 a.m. he noticed

to port the lights of a steamboat advancing at right angles to the course of the yacht. As the stranger was painted grey, it was not brought home to him in the dim light how near she was already, and he still laboured under the fond delusion that a steamboat might be, invariably, relied upon to observe the rule of the road, and keep clear of a sailing vessel. Without a shadow of doubt that the boat would shift her helm, to pass ahead or astern, he kept the yacht unswervingly upon the bearing which, on his taking charge, he had been ordered to keep.

In the course of a few seconds he perceived, with a shock of dismay, that the approaching boat, travelling at a great pace, was only a length or two away from our broadside, and that, as she made no endeavour to avoid running us down, escape from her stem depended alone on his rapid manœuvring. Providentially, his coolness was equal to the occasion. There was no time to call for help or to ask advice.

He jammed the tiller hard up, and gybed the yacht all standing. The boom came over with seconds only to spare. The tunny-boat, racing ahead close alongside, hit the end of the bowsprit a glancing blow with her quarter, and continued unchecked her wild career.

Not a man was visible upon her deck, the bridge was unoccupied, the wheel untended. It is inconceivable that she was a real runaway, with no hands on board ; it is almost equally inconceivable that, had the crew been on board, she should have been left without guidance to deal destruction or to be herself destroyed. Her navigation lights were burning brightly, and we had a shrewd suspicion that officers and men had gone below together to the risky enjoyment of sleep or refreshment.

Whatever the explanation of her untenanted decks,

she had come within a hair-breadth of sinking the *Winnie*, and of drowning her crew, but the whole business was so short in action, and so quickly over, that our minds were unable properly to appreciate how closely sudden death had passed us by. So far the cruise had suffered nothing from a shortage of thrilling episodes and narrow escapes.

We made temporary repairs, and proceeded on our way. The wind lulled rapidly, and at 6.30 a.m. the yacht was lying becalmed off Cape Prior. This lofty mass of rock, joined to the mainland by a low and narrow isthmus, when viewed from a distance by a ship near the coast, might well be mistaken for a precipitous island. At 7 a.m. barometer 30.12. Till the afternoon we had light and variable breezes, which carried us on only a few miles at a time. The topsail halyard jammed again, and was cleared by the active V. H. Duncan was taken severely to task by two disgusted men. He had promised us a fair wind and a bright sky all the way from Ortegal to Vigo, and here we were struggling with a dull day of calm and haze. He had nothing to say in defence except that, so far as his experience went, such weather as we were having was most unusual for the time of the year.

Slowly, far off the land, we dragged past the unseen ports of Ferrol and Coruña. At 3.30 p.m. a little breeze blew up from S.W. which soon worked to W.S.W. The yacht was headed out to sea on the port tack till 6.30 p.m., when, the wind westering, she was tacked, and, weathering at length the Sisargas islands, looked like fetching a long way down the coast. At 9 p.m. barometer 30.14, wind N.W., very light. Now that we had the land aboard, the log was of little service, and was stowed away for safety in its box. The night was damp and warm, and the water glassy calm. Random airs, that

wandered aimlessly about, were more productive of irritation than of help.

*Friday, August 4.* We had no wind all night. At 6 a.m. the yacht was close to the land, several miles short of Cape Villano. To-day was a repetition of yesterday. After the satisfactory passage across the Bay, our slow progress along the land, almost within sight of our goal, was felt to be vexatious, but, as we were unable to mend the yacht's pace, we curbed our impatience with admirable philosophy. Barometer 30.15. The sea was surprisingly motionless, and it was hard to believe that the nearest land to the westward lay at a distance of many thousands of miles.

At 11 a.m. a light wind came from N.W., but not till noon was the lighthouse on Cape Villano directly abeam. The wind carried us slowly across the entrance of Camarinas bay, and then, perversely, drew ahead. At 3 p.m., when several miles intervened between us and the land, the wind came again from N.W., a better breeze. Joyously we put the yacht upon a S.S.W. bearing to weather Cape Finisterre, already visible in the distance. Finisterre and the rockbound, lofty coast that stretches from it to Camarinas bay bear a distinct resemblance to the Lizard and the line of rugged cliffs that, for many a mile, with threatening brow frown down upon the Channel.

The wind soon fluttered out, and the yacht was left lying helpless off Cape Toriñana, a lighthouse-bearing peninsula, comparatively low and barely distinguishable against a dark background of towering rock. Many steamboats passed both ways, and floating wreaths of mist filled our hearts with apprehension. Any appetite for fog-shrouded adventures had already been surfeited in the neighbourhood of Ushant. But at 6.30 p.m. a heavy shower of rain swamped the fog, and brought



in its train a smart E. breeze which, for a short time, hurried the yacht along the land. With the cessation of the rain the wind also ceased. In spite of the lightness of the wind, we took off the topsail. The need to stow the sail might easily arise before the return of daylight, and we were not prepared to face the risk of replacing a slipped halyard in the dark, for the task, troublesome by day, would be infinitely more troublesome by night.

At 9 p.m. the yacht was nearly abreast of Cape Finisterre, but all its features, except the general outlines, were hidden by the darkness. The barometer, which had earlier fallen to 30.08, now stood at 30.14. The yacht's head was kept S. to avoid the Meixidos shoals, an extensive collection of rocks which lie several miles off the land. V. H. at the tiller had light breezes and occasional touches of fog. Though steamboats kept him wakeful, none passed dangerously near.

*Saturday, August 5.* Till 3 a.m. a light breeze S.E. allowed the yacht to head her course, but a sloppy sea tended to check her speed. Thereafter, with wind more shy, her head fell off a point. At 5 a.m. she was tacked towards the land. The mountain tops, silhouetted against the clear eastern sky, and rising high above the sea of mist that still obscured the lower land, combined to form a pageant of indescribable grandeur.

Heading E.S.E., and later S.E., the yacht reached by 9.45 a.m. the S. extremity of Muros bay. Barometer 30.08. We tacked off to sea. The topsail jammed, as usual, on its road aloft, and, only with difficulty, was the halyard replaced upon its sheave. The day was glorious, bright and warm. The high ground about the N. entrance to Vigo bay was sighted in the distance, but, as it lay dead to windward, the chance of finishing to-day our outward passage was not considered highly probable. At 10.30 a.m., when the wind worked further

westward, the yacht was put again upon the starboard tack. At first, only on a tight pinch, did she point to the required spot, but soon, the wind freeing and freshening, she was racing thither as though, in sympathy with her crew, she longed to have the anchor down before darkness fell.

We passed close to leeward of a bunch of boats at anchor fishing, and our nostrils were greeted with a terrible whiff of the stalest of fish. Unpleasant as was the smell, it served but to enhance the vivacity of our spirits, rising high at the prospect of a happy conclusion to our prolonged voyage. Some nostrils are strangely susceptible of the influence of evil odours. To settle a dispute about which stank the more offensively, a goat or a German prisoner, a goat was introduced into a mess-tent on the western front in the late war. The moment the animal entered, the colonel fainted. Then a German prisoner was led in—and the goat fainted!

In turn Cape Corrobedo and Salvora island, with their miles of outlying shoals, were passed, and the mouth of Arosa bay, a deep and well-sheltered inlet. By 1 p.m. we had the land aboard, and were fussily searching for an island bearing the name of Ons. It was 3 p.m. before we discovered, by cross bearings, that a supposed headland on our port beam was the object of our search. Only eight miles further ahead stood Punta Robaleira, round which lay the harbour of Vigo. The fresh breeze of the morning had, unfortunately, lulled, but it still blew with sufficient strength to warrant a reasonable assumption of an anchorage before nightfall.

But the wind drew ahead out of the bay, and set us beating slowly, against the tide, past Onza island, a satellite of Ons, across the mouth of Pontevedra bay, through the narrow N. entrance between Cies islands and the mainland. At 7 p.m., with wind all gone, the



yacht rounded Robaleira point, and we found extended before us a noble expanse of water which, deeply piercing a mountainous district like a Norwegian fiord, offers a commodious anchorage to vessels of the largest size.

The barrier of the Cies islands, which stretches almost completely across the entrance, leaving only two comparatively narrow passages on either hand, makes a natural breakwater on the only side exposed to the assault of wind and wave. These rugged islands uplift steep and lofty peaks. Faro, one of the loftiest, is topped by a lighthouse which flashes a light visible, when conditions are favourable, at a distance of 30 miles.

For a while a gentle S.W. wind carried us slowly forward. Before 9 a.m. a flat calm came, and there were still four miles to go. The help of a weak flood tide was augmented by the stroke of a sweep. As we drifted past the town of Vigo, we had plenty of time to admire the telling effect of innumerable electric lights. The inhabitants were holding high festival. The air was rent by mighty detonations, rockets, soaring high, burst into coloured showers, fire-balloons rose and hung motionless in the still atmosphere, the blare of bands came faintly to our ears. We were in a frame of mind to enjoy the beauty of a perfect night, and found the sights and sounds, that delighted the untutored crowd, in no way displeasing to our more fastidious tastes.

When, at the end of the previous August, Duncan sought to lay the *Sirius* up at Vigo, he found, throughout the length of its front, no nook where she might lie afloat, no builder's yard to shelter her ashore. Unable to gain either suggestion or advice, he began unaided a persevering search, and his perseverance soon met a well-merited reward.

From the inner end of the town the promontory of Guia projects boldly northwards, and E. of that he found

Teis bay, a quiet and secluded anchorage, with, at its head, a boat builder's yard, furnished with a roofed shed, beneath which the *Sirius* might lie in safety during the long absence of her owner. With the help of Mr. Warrior, a business man then resident in Vigo, he quickly came to terms with the owner of the yard, and returned to England fairly confident that the boat would receive the attention which her welfare demanded.

Towards Teis bay we made a tardy progress. In time we were swept past the lighthouse that stands on Guia point, and, helped by a N.W. air that filled the topsail, cautiously crept into the depths of the bay. Clear of a mooring buoy, afraid in the dark to penetrate more deeply, at 11.30 p.m. we let the anchor go, rather more than nine days out from Helford river. We had safely accomplished our self-appointed task, and, as always happens, were surprised to find how slightly our minds were excited by its successful accomplishment.

But, for all that, the soul of our poet was uplifted to a befitting height, and, inspired by his muse, he hammered out the following lines :

ENTRY INTO VIGO.

Nine nights we sailed across the watery main,  
Nine nights, but yet our port we could not gain,  
For baleful fog and adverse breeze conspire  
Maliciously to baulk our fond desire.  
Nine nights, nine nights ! Oh, we are growing lean !  
Egg-less we sail—the bread is turning green !  
But on the tenth, at last, we beat our way  
Through the close portal of fair Vigo's bay—  
Then 'neath the soft moon's full refulgent ray,  
Twixt faery shores with lights and music gay,  
With fair, faint breeze and gently flowing tide  
Into our long-sought haven slow we glide.

We retired happily to bed, and slept the unbroken slumber of men who, perils past, have won to the safety of a quiet anchorage.

Early the next morning Warrior arrived. The *Sirius* was afloat, with her hull nicely painted, and otherwise, apparently, in excellent trim. The next few days were busily spent in stepping her mast and fitting her out, and in mooring the *Winnie* and unbending her canvas. She was entrusted to A. Cobelo, the boat-builder, for the month of our absence, under the supervision of Warrior, who undertook to act as my agent.

On Thursday, August 10, we sailed away in the *Sirius*, and, visiting every port and anchorage on our way, rounded the historic bulk of Cape St. Vincent, and, a few days later, threaded a dubious road across the bar into the little known harbour of Portimao, which reeks of fish—and of much else!—in the far South of Portugal. There we left the *Sirius* in indifferent quarters, and, taking train, travelled back overland to Vigo. The story of a glorious trip, of what we saw and what we did, must, naturally, be left to our leader to relate.

### III

#### ROUGH WEATHER

The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled.

KEATS.

On the afternoon of Thursday, September 7, we stepped down upon the platform at Vigo, dusty, hungry, and thirsty, after what appeared to me, inexperienced in Continental travelling, a very nightmare of a railway journey. To be delayed 36 hours at Lisbon, because there was not a vacant seat left in any train bound for Oporto, disclosed a grievous disregard for the convenience of travellers; to be compelled to support life by sucking chocolate and gnawing unripe pears was annoying at the moment, and gave no pleasure as an afterthought. We spent the night at the Hotel Europa.

The next morning we chartered a vehicle of sorts, and, accompanied by Warrior, conveyed our baggage to the yacht. The *Winnie* had not shifted from the berth in which she had been left, and, so far as could be gathered from a cursory inspection, had suffered no material damage during the absence of her crew. Leaving V. H. and Warrior to start the work of bending canvas and making the yacht ready for the passage home, I returned with Duncan to Vigo to secure our papers, and, if possible, to improve our knowledge of Greenwich time.

The officials of the Sanidad, fortunately, spoke sufficient English to obviate the danger of mutual misunderstanding, and referred us to the Captain of the Port

to obtain from him the necessary authorization for the issue of the papers. The Captain of the Port received us with moderate politeness, but refused to move in the matter without a certificate of identity from the British consul. Off we trudged to the consulate, where, the consul being at the moment deeply immersed in business, his chief clerk filled up the form required. With this before him the Captain of the Port granted his authority, and the Sanidad handed over our papers, but demanded a fee of 10 pesetas for its share in the transaction. Nowhere else in Spain had we ever been called upon to pay a fee to the Sanidad, nor, indeed, had we ever been obliged to wade through so many tiresome formalities in carrying out what ought to be a business of the simplest character.

A call at the office of the Eastern Telegraph Company, in the hope of learning Greenwich time, was not completely successful. The time had not come through for several days, and could now be given with only approximate correctness; but Duncan was told that on the morrow at 9.45 a.m. the office would be in a position to furnish it with absolute exactitude.

We took tram to Los Carnos, whence a short walk brought us to the rugged lane which forms the main street of the village, off which the yacht was lying. The moment we were on board we joined in the work of fitting out. For inscrutable reasons our caretaker had changed the position of every article below. Sheets and other gear, which we had stored away, carefully, ready to hand, were found so hopelessly mixed and entangled that only by patience and perseverance were they definitely sorted. Despite the confusion nothing seemed to be missing. But in the course of the next few days, when it was too late, even if it had been worth while, to make complaint, we discovered the loss of much

that could ill be spared—the best saucepan, all the biscuits, most of the sugar, and a big jar of hermetically sealed butter.

By dark the yacht was ready for sea. Her bottom was far from clean, but there was no erection ashore against which she might be propped for the purpose of scrubbing, and, in any case, the lateness of the season forbade the delay which the cleaning of her bottom involved. The sooner we started, the better our chance of completing the passage before the setting in of equinoctial gales.

*Saturday, September 9.* Barometer 29.9. Flaws of wind from every quarter. By noon Duncan, his quest successfully accomplished, was back from Vigo. There was no wind, but we seized the opportunity to weigh the anchors at our ease. The kedge warp was hauled on board in a peculiarly filthy state. The sand that at low water fringed the margin of the bay was noticeably clean, but the anchors had found a patch of mud of malodorous sliminess.

At 1 p.m. we started. What little wind there was at the moment soon sank to rest. It was high water, 4 p.m., when at last, rounding Guia point, we lost sight of our late anchorage. Visitors to Vigo are advised to seek the shelter of Teis bay rather than to endure the discomfort of the unprotected roads, for Vigo bay, though nearly landlocked, is far too wide and open to provide accommodation suitable for small craft. An owner can leave his boat in Teis bay with a confident expectation of finding her still there on his return, and a walk of a few minutes brings him to Los Carnos, whence a tramcar will convey him quickly to the centre of the town.

We were given to understand that a yacht, left unguarded in Vigo roads, ran the risk of being stripped, in a very short time, of running-rigging and every mov-

able bit of gear, even if she were not carried off bodily from beneath the very eyes of her helpless owner. The longshore loafers of Vigo were depicted by their own countrymen as complete pirates, no petty pilferers.

The town itself is prettily situated on the slope of a lofty hill. The modern part contains fine buildings and clean streets, theatres, cinemas, and big hotels. The aroma that emanates from the crowded alleys of the old town recalls the lines that Coleridge wrote in reference to Cologne :

I counted two-and-seventy stench  
All well-defined, and several stinks.

A hail attracted our eyes to a boat making for the yacht, and Mr. Lewin, of the Eastern Telegraph Company, with his little son and daughter and their aunt, came alongside, and in the present calm found no difficulty in stepping to the deck. The hospitality of the Company is known all the world over, and Mr. Lewin expressed his great regret that ignorance of our presence in the port had prevented him from hunting us up earlier, and doing what he could to heighten the pleasure of our stay. His son, about to return to school in England, wished that he were crossing in the *Winnie* rather than by the uninteresting convenience of a mail-boat, but, fortunately for him, it was impossible to gratify his longing. As they left, Mr. Lewin expressed the conviction that we were fated to spend the night in drifting about Vigo bay, and Duncan, experienced in the weather of these parts, agreed with his dispiriting prognostication.

But the best of prophets, even when they agree, are not invariably infallible. Just before dusk an E. breeze sprang up. Instead of dying away, as was apprehended, it gained steadily in strength, and sent us along quite

fast enough through waters with which we were imperfectly acquainted. But the harbour is well marked by lighted buoys and beacons, and we safely found our way round Robaleira point.

By 9 p.m., barometer 30, wind N.E., strong, we had passed clear of the Cies islands, and were beginning to plunge heavily through an unfriendly sea. The yacht was steered N.W. to give a wide berth to inshore dangers. Though we felt that full advantage ought to be taken of a favourable slant, we were obliged at 11 p.m. to come to the wind and reef, for the yacht was buried in the lumpy sea and was letting in floods of water through her parched topsides. We had anticipated that, after lying in a hot sun for a month unused, her seams might show a lamentable weakness, but the rapidity with which she admitted water seemed to point to something worse than the ordinary opening of sun-baked seams. Vergil's words were strangely applicable :

*Laxis laterum compagibus omnes  
Accipiunt inimicum imbrem rimisque fatiscunt.*

Though we felt no fear about loosened fastenings, there was no denying that gaping cracks gave too free admission to the watery foe.

*Sunday, September 10.* Soon after midnight the manning of the pump could be no longer delayed. The semi-rotary was soon choked. This was a crushing blow, for we had approached our task with good cheer, thinking to accomplish it with celerity from the safe shelter of the cabin. But while Duncan and myself toiled in turn, disgustedly, at the deck-pump, V. H., in spite of a bad cold and general seediness, unbolted the face of the culprit, and removed from its interior a fragment of wood. The face was re-bolted and the pump put in action. In a few moments it was choked



again by another obstruction. The need to clear it arose so frequently that, at last, we clapped on the face and worked away at the handle without inserting the bolts. The pump in no way resented the treatment, and, after picking up every impediment that the bilge could provide, it worked with efficiency, and was voted a godsend. To pump in the cabin, with comfort and safety, is incomparably more attractive than to pump on deck at the risk of one's life.

The amount of pumping required to empty the yacht excited alarm, but an explanation was forthcoming as soon as daylight arrived. We discovered that through five feet of the seam immediately above the rubbing band, on the port quarter, whenever it was submerged by the heel of the yacht, an unbroken torrent of water poured into the cockpit.

At 3 a.m. the yacht was headed N. by W. Salvora light flashed over our starboard quarter, and on our weather bow shone the fixed light of Cape Corrobedo. Far outside projecting shoals the yacht plunged onwards on the direct course to Finisterre, and, just before daylight, a long way ahead, its light was sighted. The weather left something to be desired, but we were, at least, advancing on our homeward course. Barometer 30.09.

But all the brightness was taken out of our prospects by the steady working of the wind from N.E. to N. Resolutely we held on close-hauled through a sea that grew worse from hour to hour. At last, abreast of Finisterre, but separated from the land by a wide space of rearing greybeards, we were constrained to lie to for a season, reluctant as we were to cease our efforts. But the struggle with the violent wind and overwhelming sea had been exhausting, and nature demanded a rest till our physical vigour was restored.

The late luxurious meals ashore, rendered possible by the fine weather of our trip on the *Sirius*, and by the extraordinary depreciation of the Portuguese currency, had tainted our hardihood with unhealthy symptoms. V. H. was seasick, and was little comforted to learn that his skipper expected shortly to become his companion in misfortune.

"How is it, captain," asked a grievously suffering lady of the skipper of a passenger boat as he hurried from a meal in the saloon to his post on the bridge, "how is it you are never sick like me?"

"Specks, ma'am, it's because I bolts down my wittles!" was the ambiguous reply. V. H. refused all food. From a sense of duty, I ate what I could, but—I was unable to bolt it down!

It was not till 5 p.m. that, with a shade less wind, we let the staysail draw, and, putting the yacht about, reached in towards the land, hidden, for the moment, by a cloud of heavy mist. The first sight caught of Finisterre, looming indistinctly through the fog, showed that during the hours of lying-to we had been swept far to the southward. The yacht was kept on the port tack as long as was possible, for the further she went in, the smoother the water we found, thanks to the shelter furnished by the far-projecting cape.

At 9 p.m., barometer 30.1, wind N.E., still strong, the yacht, on starboard tack, was making good weather and heading up for Finisterre. But the wind piped up again, and, as soon as the protection of the cape was lost, the sea proved exceedingly heavy and difficult to deal with. By 11.30 p.m. the weather was so bad that we were obliged to consider which was the lesser evil of the only possible alternatives, to lay the yacht to again, or, putting the tiller up, to bolt back to shelter. To lie to in the track of numerous steamboats offered no

irresistible temptation, and, like a general unwilling to admit a reverse, we were not long in deciding upon, what we were pleased to call, a strategic retreat.

Immediately E. of Finisterre the land to the N. is broken by the broad recess of Concubion bay, at the N.W. end of which lies an anchorage, off Lagosteira beach, while from the N.E. corner a narrow inlet leads up to Concubion town. Duncan had visited the place the year before, and his suggestion to seek refuge there was accepted without demur.

*Monday, September 11.* Accordingly, at midnight, we slacked up our sheets, and, pursued by a howling blast and a raging sea, soon raced under the shelter of the cape into smoother water. We gave the land a berth of a mile or more to avoid the possibility of hidden dangers and the certainty of heavy squalls. Before long we cleared Finisterre, and sighted the occulting light on Lobeira Grande, an island of no great size which lies off the E. shore of Concubion bay.

The yacht at first headed up for the light. Only a few miles lay between us and our anchorage, and, with an unbroken barrier of land between us and the wind, we did not seem unjustified in anticipating the advantage of smooth water. The change from the angry turmoil of the sea for the quieter conditions of the bay gave to our lowered spirits an extravagant lift. In fact, the only thing that fretted slightly our complacency was the natural anxiety felt by anyone whose lot it is to enter a strange harbour in the dark and in stormy weather. But our anxiety proved totally uncalled for. We did not enter the harbour in the dark—we did not enter it at all!

Without warning a furious squall struck us, and the water was lashed up, in a moment, into short, steep seas of peculiar viciousness. The yacht's head fell off; she no longer pointed for the light, but for an unknown

shore, invisible, but close at hand. The cessation of the squall was as sudden as its onset, and we were left wallowing distractedly in an abominable confusion of top-heavy surges.

The calm lasted no long time. With a triumphant shriek another squall struck the helpless yacht a malicious blow of concentrated spite. Her deck was flooded to the cockpit coamings, and, overpressed with wind and deeply buried in water, she responded only slowly to the movement of the tiller. Three times, in spite of careful nursing, she refused to come about. Shipwreck lay ahead, if we went further eastward. We must wear the yacht without delay.

The peak was dropped and the yacht was paying off handsomely, when a crash was heard above the roaring of the wind, and we saw, with consternation, that the bumpkin boom had parted. Later we discovered that the ear of the plate, to which its port shroud was shackled, had been torn away. The gybe was safely accomplished, the peak set up again, and the flapping mizen taken off.

Satisfied with the damage inflicted, the squall died down to a gentle breeze, but the yacht, bereft of the mizen, jogged slowly to windward with sullen unwillingness. Recurrent squalls checked any inclination to shake out our reefs. Though the wind still blew from N. to N.E., Duncan attributed its spasms of violence to the influence of the high ground at the back of Finisterre, which, by deflecting its course, possibly increased the impetuosity of its headlong career. Sometimes on one tack, sometimes on the other, now buried to the rail, now almost becalmed, we punched on wearily through the hours of darkness.

At 5 a.m., when, at length, returning day revealed our road, feeling that some step must be taken to improve our progress, though the yacht's incapacity was due to

lack of after canvas, we, experimentally, unrolled the jib. The detriment of lee helm, caused by the extra headsail, was fully counterbalanced by an increase in liveliness. We weathered Lobeira Grande, and, putting about, fetched on the starboard tack the mouth of Concubion inlet. After a board to the eastward, on putting about, we hoped to make the tower-protected rock, situated off Cape Cee, which forms the end of the harbour's western boundary. Fierce squalls came shrieking down the narrow fiord, but they caused little concern, for the sea was of no account, and, the harder it blew, the sooner would an anchorage be gained.

But fortune held, hidden up her sleeve, an enervating trump card still to play. The bobstay burst !

The jib was at once rolled up to save the bowsprit, but the bursting of the bobstay was a serious misfortune, for the loss of the jib reduced the yacht to a state of almost sheer impotence. Under double-reefed mainsail and staysail alone she was quite unable to eat her way up the windswept gut, and, in the half-gale of the moment, to shake out reefs would be the act of a madman. Bitter as it was to be disabled before the open doorway of success, we bowed to the inevitable, and ran away to find shelter easier of attainment.

With off-shore winds the directions spoke well of the anchorage E. of the village of Finisterre, off Lagosteira beach, and thither we quickly decided to direct our course. The tearing breeze soon carried the yacht across the intervening space. The discovery of the spot and the choice of a berth were both assisted by the presence of a line of anchored coasters. Rounding the stern of the inmost, we dropped the anchor between her and the shore at 8 a.m. with wearied bodies and ruffled feelings. We were all dejected by heavy colds. V. H. had caught his ashore, and had infected the rest.

Neither Duncan nor myself had ever before suffered from colds at sea, and we bitterly resented the loss of our usual good health. After breakfast we turned in till noon. Barometer 30.11.

Sleep removed our fatigue and soothed our acidulated tempers. We knew that at a Spanish village, even if they could be effected at all, repairs would require a weary time, and after lunch, with quiet determination, we set about doing the work ourselves. We were fortunate in having in V. H. a skilled carpenter. The saw had long disappeared from the yacht's collection of tools, but the skipper of the ketch lying near, readily comprehending our signs, immediately lent us a saw, beautifully greased and in excellent condition. By cutting the requisite length from the square-sail yard we secured at once a respectable bumpkin boom. Last year, too, this weighty spar came to the rescue at a difficult moment. Never used for its legitimate purpose, it bore no malice, but suffered bisection without a groan. Peace to its ghost!

The new bumpkin was lacking in stoutness, but, well fitted and carefully stayed, it seemed likely to prove sufficiently strong to carry us home. The bobstay was replaced by a double length of new manilla. Its undoubted strength redeemed its unsightly appearance. The saw was returned with thanks; payment for its use was laughingly refused.

After the successful completion of our labours, cheerfulness dispelled a slight cloud of depression caused by the bad luck that so far had marked our passage. Throughout the day the hard N.E. wind was emphasized by frequent squalls. Despite considerable rolling, we had no complaint to make of our berth, and the scenery about the bay, pretty and varied, satisfied our critical eyes. We seemed, already, to have left behind the genial

warmth of the south, for, though the sun shone brightly, the weather was exceedingly cold. The wind died away largely after dark. Barometer 30.18.

*Tuesday, September 12.* On turning out at 8 a.m. we found a dead calm in our immediate vicinity, but all the coasters had their canvas set in readiness for the S. breeze which was already rippling the water in the far offing. Barometer 30.12. At 9.30 a.m. the wind penetrated the recesses of the bay, and we all, with one accord, made off at our best pace, for with an on-shore wind the anchorage becomes, at once, untenable. Some of the coasters ran, apparently, to Concubion, others, like ourselves, worked out in short boards to weather Finisterre.

Among the latter was a brigantine, a craft of a beautiful but unweatherly rig. Brigantines, in my boyhood, were not uncommon, but, in the present day, they are nearly as rare as the still more unweatherly brig. In working to windward she was left far behind, but, when once she had rounded the cape, her square sails pulled her along, and she began to overhaul the majority of her rivals.

At 11.15 a.m. we weathered Finisterre, a magnificent headland that deserves its name. Viewed from the S., it is decidedly striking: viewed from the N. and W. the adjacent cliffs, its equals in height, rob it of much of its individuality. The wind, S. by W., was of pleasant strength, the morning bright, and the sea smooth. Bearing away, we ran for a while N. by W. to make a good offing, and then shifted the course to N. by E. At 1.30 p.m. Toriñana was abeam, barely discernible through a thickening mist. Soon heavy fog held sea and land in dismal thralldom, and the force of the wind showed rapid increase. The beauty of the morning was forgotten in the misery of the afternoon.

For an hour we ran N.N.E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. Being by that time, presumably, off Cape Villano and well out to sea, we gybed the boom to port, and headed the yacht E. by N. to run to the Sisargas islands. The wind grew more and more vicious, and at 3 p.m. we tied down a pair of reefs in the mainsail, rolled up the jib, and, doubtful of the stability of our improvised bumpkin, took off the mizen. Heavy rain fell, and the wind showed signs of blowing up for a gale, but the sea remained unexpectedly quiet. The short canvas carried was ample for the boisterous weather.

We were greatly disappointed to find that, though the yacht had taken up everywhere else, the leaky length of seam in her port quarter still admitted a serious flood. The semi-rotary pump quickly ejected the water, but we hesitated about starting our trip across the Bay with an opening in the side wide enough to cause constant disquiet. Our supply of bread, too, was insufficient for the voyage.

Ahead we had the choice of two convenient ports, Coruña and Cedeira. We decided to put into the latter. It was 30 miles further on our way, and easy of access in any weather, while Coruña demanded, at the least, a hard beat of several miles against an overwhelming wind, with the added difficulty of darkness to contend with. At rest in harbour we could stop the plaguy leak, for, as it was far above water, and easy to get at, we had no doubt that our unpractised hands had sufficient skill to caulk it securely.

At 4.30 p.m., through a fortunate break in the fog, the Sisargas islands were sighted, some distance ahead, dead in the course we were steering, and the yacht was brought a point further N. to ensure our passing at a sufficient distance. The fog fled before the onslaught of the roaring wind. At 7 p.m. the islands were abeam,



and the yacht's head was brought back to the previous course.

The night came down very dark, and a heavy sea had made before its arrival. Steering became very difficult, and V. H. inadvertently gybed the yacht, but no damage was done, and we seemed to run more easily with the boom out to starboard. The binnacle light chose this distressful time for an unusual display of petulant naughtiness. It popped out repeatedly for reasons unknown, and because of the violent wind was not easily relighted.

At 9 p.m., barometer 29.28, wind very strong, W.S.W., sea heavy and untrue. The earlier part of my watch was a time of constant anxiety, for the night was pitch dark, and the wind dead aft, and my only safeguard against a sudden gybe was the feel of the wind on the back of my neck. But later the strain was lessened by the rising of the moon, for, though it failed entirely to break through obstructive clouds, its hidden face lighted in no small measure the encircling gloom. The wind, too, worked further W., and the sea ran truer.

At 11.30 p.m. a light was sighted broad on the starboard beam which, though it showed but indistinctly, was identified as the light on the Hercules tower, standing at the entrance of Coruña bay. We expected soon to pick up the light on Cape Prior, but, with cruel coyness, it veiled its presence from our prying eyes. Fog, it was conjectured, still hung heavily along the coast.

*Wednesday, September 13.* Although he was suffering from a serious cold, Duncan insisted upon taking his turn on deck at midnight. He enjoyed an uneventful time, but at 3 a.m. suggested the propriety of lying to till daylight, for we had run our distance and must avoid the risk of finding ourselves to leeward of our port. The weather was slightly finer, and, setting

the mizen, we laid the yacht to on the starboard tack. She lay as quietly as could be desired, with her head at S.S.W.

To the uninstructed reader this passage from Cape Villano to off Cedeira will appear to be a run of the simplest character, but, in reality, it gave us a time of the gravest anxiety. The yacht was passing a coast deeply indented between projecting capes, concealed first by mist, later by darkness. When we failed to find the important light on Cape Prior, our safety depended solely on the accuracy of the course kept, and a true estimation of the distance run.

Land was in sight at daylight, three or four miles away. Duncan bade us head straight for an apparent break in the cliffs. He admitted that he saw nothing that he definitely recognized, but declared that, if this were not the bay we sought, Cedeira had been effaced from the world by satanic agency. Soon his eyes found enlightenment. A lighthouse, standing on a bluff far inside the inlet, proved conclusively that Cedeira lay before us. We were extremely glad to know that shelter was so near, for we longed to escape for a while from the raging S.W. wind and the battering of tumbling seas.

The moment we shot in between the lofty walls of cliff that guard the shores on either hand, we found the water smoother and the wind less violent. A reef of half-tide rocks stands in the middle of the bay. They are the only danger, and, though unmarked, present no difficulty. Running on with confidence, we turned away to port, and brought up at 7 a.m. outside a fleet of fishing craft and coasters that lay in a bight, bordered by a sandy beach, which bears the name of Area Longa. Barometer 29.8.

In the early afternoon I landed the crew in the

bight, to purchase necessary provisions for our voyage at the village of Cedeira, which stood half a mile higher up the inlet and out of sight of our anchorage. The water looked smooth, but there was a heavy run on the beach, and landing proved both difficult and exciting. Fortunately, a pram is a craft of a suitable build for landing on a surf-swept shore, and the crew scrambled to dry land without the indignity of a ducking. And, on their return, they were brought off safely, too, to the patent disappointment of a crowd of boys who had gathered to criticize the clumsy manœuvres of men unacquainted with the sporting chances of an unknown beach.

In the evening, just before high water, I rowed Duncan in the pram up the shallow river to Cedeira. More Spanish money was required, and the exchange office was open only after 6 p.m. We landed on a stretch of sand where the run was very violent, and a mob of turbulent boys made it impossible to leave the boat unguarded. Spanish boys are the most objectionable specimens of their kind that it has ever been my ill luck to meet. Mischievous to a degree, they are subject, so far as a stranger can observe, neither to parental nor police control. Duncan hurried off at once upon his business. A man asked me by signs to put him on board a lighter, surging violently to and fro a few yards from the shore. I assented to his request, and then it was that kind heaven bestowed upon me a moment of unalloyed delight.

In launching the boat, by cunningly simulated accident, I inflicted heavy punishment upon the most prominent leaders of the hostile rabble. One was doubled up by the blade of an oar judiciously planted in the pit of his stomach, the head of another rattled beneath a blow from the butt end, a third had his instep

ground under the heel of a rubber boot—if only the heel had been of leather tipped with iron!—and, lastly, —my most artistic effort—a perfectly timed stumble hurled a fourth headlong into a hissing swell that came hurtling up the strand.

My procedure may be stigmatized as brutal, but brutality is the only treatment that Spanish ruffians thoroughly appreciate. Brutal or not, it did me a world of good. “*Plus je connais les hommes, plus j’aime les chiens,*” wrote a witty Frenchman. If Spanish boys are included under the head of men, the statement has my warmest sympathy. I put the man on board and then hung on to the lighter. The crowd ashore shouted abuse and taunts for the space of an hour, when, tiring of a one-sided game, it melted quickly away.

Dusk merged into dark, the water fell fast and nasty breakers showed on the shallow bar, and still Duncan delayed his coming. When, at last, after an absence of two hours, he reappeared, no time was wasted in asking questions, but, without a moment’s delay, the return journey was commenced. Though some care was required, the pram was brought safely through an area of heaving surges, and reached the yacht without shipping a serious quantity of water. Over our supper Duncan unfolded the story of his long lingering.

Almost at the moment of his landing he was tackled by a coastguard and a carabinero, and bidden to give an account of the yacht’s business in the port and of his own presence in the town. He had neither passport nor papers in his pocket, but in the mixture of Spanish, English, French and German, with which he surmounts all the difficulties that confront him on a foreign strand, he explained that the yacht had entered the port in search of shelter, and that her crew were harmless, if eccentric, individuals. His explanation, backed by an artless

smile, was accepted without question. The carabinero withdrew, and the coastguard proved to be a veritable friend in need.

When, upon the happy conclusion of the interview, Duncan enquired the way to the money-changer's office, the man led him thither in person, and, finding the door locked, hunted up its proprietor and compelled him to return to his neglected business. No business, however, was transacted, for the money-changer refused to deal with notes, declaring, emphatically, that he was prepared to give Spanish money only in exchange for English gold. To make his meaning clearer, he unlocked a drawer, and pulled out a handful of sovereigns and half-sovereigns. The astonishing sight took Duncan's breath away and set his heart palpitating with excitement, but did nothing whatever to facilitate the business that had brought him to the office.

From the deadlock thus created he was rescued by the coastguard. He was understood to intimate that a friend of his would make no difficulty about handing over pesetas to the full value of a note. Surprised, and somewhat doubtful whether he had understood aright, Duncan accompanied him down a country road to a building which, even under the cover of darkness, could be mistaken for nothing but a farmer's house.

Quite certain now of a mistake somewhere, he entered unwillingly, casting about in his mind for phrases of apology for an unjustified intrusion. But he was introduced to two brothers, elderly men of old time courtesy, who, on learning the difficulty, promptly expressed their willingness to exchange notes at the rate of 28 pesetas to the pound. The deal was forthwith completed, and, after thanking his benefactors for their kindness to a stranger in distress, Duncan, still under the convoy of the coastguard, returned to the boat.

A well-earned tip was scornfully waved away by the man, who, regarded to begin with as a potential foe, proved in the end to be a most valuable friend.

Wind at night still strong S.W. Barometer 29.9.

*Thursday, September 14.* Another dirty day. Barometer 29.93. Wind S.W. V. H. set to work upon the defective seam, cleared out its perished oakum for a space of five or six feet, and recaulked it carefully with cotton waste. Duncan spent a happy morning in the cockpit, doubled up in painful attitudes, doing his best from the inside upon a suspected seam immediately below, which was covered outside by the rubbing band.

In the afternoon I landed them to complete the purchase of supplies. The surge was heavy on the beach, but they landed dry, and the pram was launched again without shipping enough water to endanger her stability. On their return a full gallery of youthful spectators was hugely delighted by a free and diverting entertainment. The dinghy filled as she touched the shore, and it was only by the exercise of unhopd for agility that I escaped myself an appropriate soaking.

The sight filled the breast of the poet with the divine afflatus which can be dissipated only by an outbreak into song :

AN APPRECIATION OF THE ABOVE EPISODE.

It was indeed a sight to see,  
The skipper come bounding o'er the sea.  
Upon the surf he deftly rides,  
Now up, now down, the dinghy slides,  
Then underneath him sudden dips.  
True to his name the skipper skips !  
Oh, it was marvellous to see  
His skipperish agility.  
The bursting surges sweep to snatch him,  
But, ere their foaming flood can catch him,  
He staggers reeling to the strand,  
With bending knee and groping hand.

The run was so heavy at the spot that the dry embarkation of many loaves of bread was deemed impossible. Launching forth alone, I paddled along shore deeper into the bight till a corner was reached where the run seemed to be less. It was less in appearance than in actual fact, but, with unanticipated ease, we succeeded in getting off with the load of supplies undamaged.

We had now on board a large store of bread, but an inadequate supply of paraffin. A two-gallon tin had been taken to the village to be replenished, but, owing either to a misunderstanding on the part of the vendor, or to a miscalculation of foreign measures on the part of the purchaser, it was brought back to the yacht only barely half full. A coating of white lead reinforced the new caulking, and removed any latent doubt about the complete stoppage of the leak.

The barometer, which had risen rapidly all day, at 7 p.m. stood at 30.15.

## IV

### HALCYON DAYS AND HALCYON NIGHTS

At length the waves are hushed to peace,  
O'er flying clouds the sun prevails :  
The weary winds their efforts cease,  
And fill no more the flagging sails :  
Fixed to the deep the vessel rides  
Obedient to the changing tides :  
No helm she feels, no course she keeps,  
But on the liquid marble sleeps.

CRABBE.

*Friday, September 15.* Heavy rain fell during the night. Wind in the morning N.W., fresh. The clouded sky held out little promise of finer weather, but, on the other hand, the barometer had risen to 30.34. At 9.45 a.m. we started under short canvas to beat out of the harbour. We were hardly under way before the wind fell light, and we shook out all our reefs. Her foul bottom made the yacht very sluggish in the paltry wind, and the heavy rollers that met us, as we approached the entrance, deadened still further her inconsiderable speed. It was nearly noon when a smear of rain brought a N.W. air which carried us slowly out between the frowning cliffs into the freedom of the open sea. As we made our exit, we agreed that Cedeira was by no means the least attractive harbour of our acquaintance.

At first the yacht, on the port tack, pointed N., but she soon fell off a point, and doubtful of weathering Cape Candelaria, we put about and headed seawards. Till 3 p.m. it was practically calm. Any wandering



air was shaken out of the sails by an incessant roll. A little breeze came from N. by W. of sufficient strength to steady the canvas. At 4 p.m. we were abreast of Candelaria, and an hour later the yacht was put N.E., on the course that led direct to Ushant. At 7.30 p.m. the log was put overboard, and our departure taken from Cape Ortegal.

The day was chilly and dull. At 9 p.m. the light breeze failed. Barometer 30.5. Till midnight the calm was broken only by infrequent flaws, which barely rippled the water and left the yacht unmoved.

*Saturday, September 16.* Not a breath of wind was felt till 7.30 a.m., when a light W.S.W. breeze arose insufficient in strength to work the log. Barometer 30.43. A beautiful morning was woefully spent in an unsuccessful search for something stronger than rambling airs. A tunny-boat steamed past, and greeted us with an unintelligible hail. Ortegal was about ten miles astern. Swept by the tide, the yacht was nearer to it in the afternoon than she had been in the morning. At 4.30 p.m. our drooping spirits were, at last, cheered by the arrival of a W.S.W. draught, which enabled us to keep the yacht's head upon the course.

Thus was gently broken a calm of twenty hours. The scenery of the N.W. corner of Spain is fine, and worthy of close inspection, but enough is as good as a feast, and too much brings satiety to sight no less than to appetite. On the outward voyage no definite point of departure was attainable from Ushant; to-day we were unable to depart, though we had the choice of several points of departure.

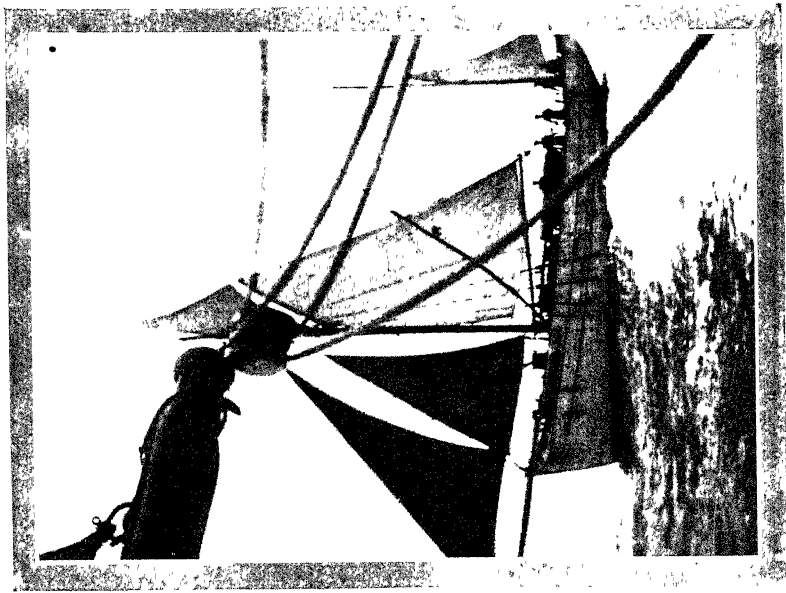
Duncan unbosomed himself of a dream which had unsettled the calm of his night's slumber. Under circumstances which he was unable to recall, he encountered King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. He was mightily

alarmed to infer from the king's demeanour that he was suspected of casting sheep's eyes at the beautiful queen, an impertinence of which, he protested to us firmly, he was absolutely innocent. He felt the necessity of walking with extreme wariness, for he did not like the look of King Solomon at all, backed as he was by crowded ranks of henchmen, armed with lengthy spears and curved scimitars. Suddenly he found himself awake, to his own great relief, but to the bitter disappointment of his audience, who had hoped that such a promising beginning might lead to exciting developments.

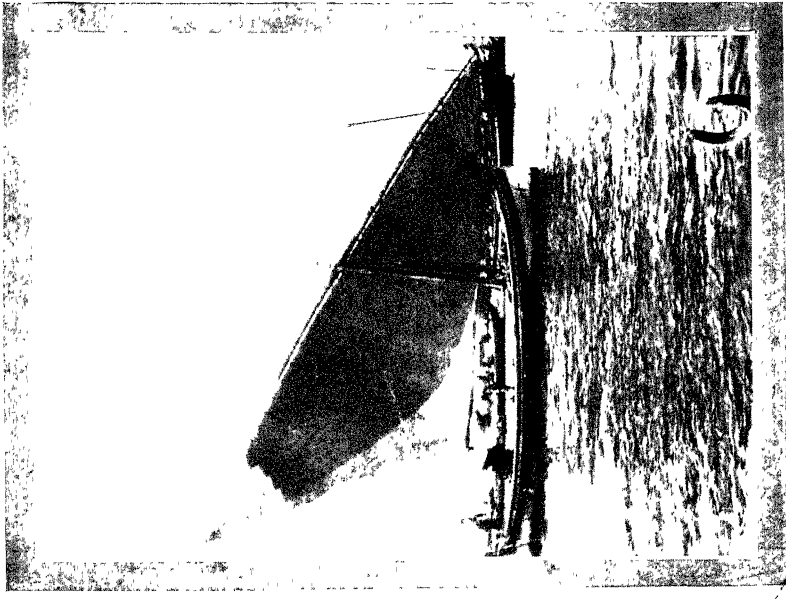
At 9 p.m. barometer 30.34. The sky to windward looked full of wet. The W.S.W. wind, light but steady, was carrying the yacht slowly past Estaca light. Nothing of importance broke the quiet monotony of Duncan's watch.

*Sunday, September 17.* From midnight to 3 a.m. the time passed very pleasantly on deck. The wind increased slightly in strength, and, working to W., kept the head sails quiet. The heavily clouded sky made the night very dark. A shame-faced fragment of a moon showed up for a few moments in the E. Our pace was far from rapid, but, after a long period of calm, any progress fills the heart with joy. The gentle breeze held up all night. Daylight brought a dull and humid atmosphere, and no morning sight was possible. At 9 a.m. barometer 30.33, log 30, wind W., a gentle breeze.

At 10 a.m. we met a French tunny-boat. Coming away in our wake, she passed slowly through our lee. Her skipper was very inquisitive about the yacht, and asked many questions about whence we had come and whither we were bound. His manner seemed to imply that he did not believe a word of our laborious answers. The French yawl-rigged tunny-boats are powerful craft,



The tummy-boat passing through our lee.



A lateener setting sail ("West and by South").

[To face page 200.

and they cruise in pursuit of their prey hundreds of miles from the land.

The sun passed through the clouds and a bright day seemed to be assured, but clouds soon regained the upper hand, and Duncan succeeded, only with difficulty, in securing an ex-meridian altitude. Our position was found to be, at 0.48 p.m., Lat.  $44^{\circ} 51' 0''$  N., and Long. (by account)  $7^{\circ} 23' 0''$  W.; distance from Ortegál 70 miles. Duncan's mind was already profoundly worried by doubt about the chronometer's rate which, from lack of any evidence to the contrary, was assumed to be the same as it was, doubtfully, supposed to be on the outward voyage.

All the afternoon we ran on with a gentle breeze over a slumbering sea. The sun brightened up, for a short time, our dull environment, but had disappeared completely before the arrival of a time suitable for the taking of an afternoon sight. We might have carried the topsail with advantage, but, in spite of Duncan's protests, V. H. agreed with me in refusing to have anything further to do with a dangerous customer. It required no vivid imagination to foresee ultimate disaster from its jamming halyard. At the approach of dusk there was a fall of rain, and the wind worked to W.N.W.

At 9 p.m. barometer 30.33, log 71, wind N.W. At 10.30 p.m. the wind headed the yacht off, first to N.E. by E., and later to E.N.E., but it was too light to drive us materially eastward of our course.

*Monday, September 18.* The yacht's head gradually fell off till, by 6 a.m., she was doing no better than E. She was put about, and, on starboard tack, looked shyly at N. The wind settled down into a steady N.E. breeze, the day came out bright and fine, the sea remained smooth, and the barometer had risen to 30.48. At 11.30 a.m. the log marked 100 miles, and the yacht's

head came up to N.N.E., but it soon fell back again to N. Our position was somewhat doubtful. The morning observation, obtained late and, for other reasons, not entirely convincing, put us 20 miles too far to the westward. From 2.30 p.m. for a couple of hours the yacht headed an honest N.N.E. The afternoon sight made our Lat.  $45^{\circ} 53' 0''$  N., and our Long.  $7^{\circ} 14' 30''$  W. The observations taken were completely satisfactory, but his mistrust of the chronometer made Duncan still doubtful of our exact position.

At 9 p.m. barometer 30.54, wind light N.E., log 132. A bank of cloud in the N.W. raised a faint hope of a breeze from that quarter. Shortly before midnight the gentle air worked to S.E., and the yacht was put upon a N.E. course again.

*Tuesday, September 19.* The S.E. wind blew faintly till 3 a.m. Thereafter we endured the misery of a protracted calm. Hour after hour passed and not the faintest breath ruffled the face of the shimmering water. Barometer 30.5. We felt aggrieved, for, on the eve of the equinoxes, one might reasonably expect rough seas and strong winds, whereas our progress was delayed by weather over-fine and calms and paltry breezes. Beer and whisky were both finished, jam and marmalade were nearly done, and, worst of all, tobacco was running alarmingly short. In our discontent, we thought a gale would be a pleasant change. Thanks either to acquaintance with a sailor's life, or to the deep insight of a poet's fancy, Crabbe was the author of some lines that aptly fitted our present situation :

Sick of a calm the sailor lies,  
And views the still, reflecting seas ;  
Or whistling to the burning skies  
He hopes to wake the slumbering breeze ;

The silent moon, the solemn night  
The same dull round of thought excite,  
Till, tired of the revolving train,  
He wishes for the storm again.

Our noon position was found to be Lat.  $46^{\circ} 26' 30''$  N., and Long.  $7^{\circ} 15' 0''$  W., 150 miles from Ushant. The afternoon passed without change. At rare intervals the slightest of ripples showed the movement of air over the water, but it never rose high enough to affect the canvas or to extend the burgee. Observations for longitude were taken at 5 p.m., but, as our advance since noon was inappreciable, the task of working them out was voted to be useless labour. The sunset was magnificent, and darkness was scarcely upon us before our eyes were attracted by the sight of Venus shining in the west with the dazzling effect of an electric light.

At 9 p.m. barometer 30.5 ; log still 132 ; wind a faint draught from W. too feeble to steady the sails, or stream the log-line. From horizon to horizon not a cloud darkened the gleam of any one of the myriads of stars that shone down steadily upon a sea gently undulated by a N.W. roll.

*Wednesday, September 20.* Till 3 a.m. there was just sufficient wind to allow us to decide, with assurance, that it still blew from W. At that hour, as on yesterday, a flat calm began, and there seemed to be every prospect of another windless day. At 8 a.m. barometer steady, 30.5. At breakfast jam was rationed. My pouch held only a few pipefuls more of tobacco ; Duncan had left about as much, but he was possessed, in addition, of three cigars of inferior quality, but, at the moment, of priceless value. V. H. had nothing to smoke. We offered him none of our slender store.

At 9.30 a.m. a small breeze from S.E. gave the yacht steerage way, but her progress was slow and

detestably uncomfortable. The growing N.W. roll gave to the boom an exasperating restlessness, nor suffered the canvas to stay for a moment its incessant slatting. Our tempers, missing the assuagement of tobacco, were growing explosive, when Providence intervened with a timely distraction.

Duncan was sitting forward. Without noticing its arrival, he found seated beside him a weary bird. There was nothing unusual in the occurrence; many a bird had before now taken refuge on the yacht; but the interest aroused relieved our boredom and alleviated irritation. Our visitor was obviously a land bird. The ornithology of the company was lamentably weak, but we, hesitatingly, decided that it was a bullfinch.

At 10.30 a.m. the wheel of the log began to make spasmodic revolutions, its first movement for more than 30 hours. The morning was very bright. The warmth of the sun suggested shirt-sleeves, but the bite of the wind advised a thick jacket. Our noon position, if the chronometer were even approximately correct, was Lat.  $46^{\circ} 38' 0''$  N., and Long.  $7^{\circ} 5' 0''$  W., 135 miles from Ushant. The supposed bullfinch, recovering from its first fatigue, made a tour of the deck, and examined various objects with absorbing interest. It seemed to be neither hungry nor thirsty, for it disdained bread-crumbs and refused every offer of water.

The wind in time acquired greater strength, and by 2 p.m. the yacht was, at last, beginning to travel under the influence of a steady S.E. breeze. The bird was the cause of the most sensational excitement. Owing to a slight lurch of the yacht, or to the attack of a fit of giddiness, it tumbled overboard, and went floating away on its back, with its little feet pawing the empty air. The sight was most piteous. But when we gave it up for lost, the bird unexpectedly righted itself,

spread its wings, and fluttered back to the deck, where it crouched a picture of half-drowned misery, with disordered feathers and bedraggled tail. After a while it boldly hopped into the cabin, and settled down with apparent comfort in a secluded corner.

The breeze grew steadily stronger. Afternoon sights made our position Lat.  $46^{\circ} 51' 0''$  N., and Long.  $6^{\circ} 49' 0''$  W., 120 miles from Ushant. These were the last sights of the passage, for fog and cloud prevented any further use of the sextant.

At 9 p.m. barometer 30.44 : log 164 : wind E.S.E., steady and strong. The sky, in part, was bright with stars, in part, obscured by heavy clouds. The N.W. roll was subsiding. Till midnight there was no change to record.

*Thursday, September 21.* With breeze still strong the yacht was travelling fast in spite of her foul bottom. At 6 a.m. Duncan, relieved at the tiller, went below, but returned to the deck immediately with the corpse of the bird in his hand, which he summarily consigned to the deep. It was, no doubt, a sick bird when first it alighted on the yacht, but how it came to die so far from its natural surroundings was a pitiful tragedy that defied explanation.

With daylight the wind moderated. At 8 a.m. barometer 30.37 : wind S.E. : sea smooth : log 216. Thick fog descended. At 10.30 a.m. by dead reckoning Ushant, distant 41 miles, bore E.N.E., but the yacht's head was kept on the course N.E. Only barely in time, through the fog we sighted a tunny-boat lying with her staysail a-weather, and passed close under her stern. Her crew gesticulated wildly and shouted what sounded like "Ouessant ! Ouessant !" We could only wonder, supposing we heard them aright, whether they were shouting a warning or asking for information. We



had reason, later, to think that the former was probably the case. The boat was speedily lost in a winding sheet of fog.

To take a meridian altitude was, of course, impossible, but at noon our calculation made us still 30 miles short of Ushant. The sea, which had been growing all the morning, suddenly became slighter and altered its character. The big S.E. roll was displaced by the short, sloppy seas of well-sheltered water, and we had an uneasy suspicion that, nearer to the mainland than we had supposed, we were crossing the mouth of the Iroise, the wide bay enclosed between the Saints and Toulinguet point, which forms the S.W. protection of the estuary that leads up to Brest. The lulling wind was working further S., and the fog was of exceptional density.

It was exactly 3 p.m. when first was brought to our startled ears the hoarse three-blasted roar of a powerful siren. It sounded slightly on our port bow, and there could not be a moment's doubt of its dangerous proximity. That we had not heard it earlier was, probably, due to our course leading through one of those mysterious areas of silence into which the shriek or roar of siren fails to penetrate through a fog-laden atmosphere. A hasty overhaul of the Light List conclusively showed that the warning signal came from La Jument rock.

Ushant Island runs roughly E. and W. At its N.W. end stands Crac'h lighthouse, and a mile or more E. or S.E. of it La Jument rock lifts its always uncovered head. Instead of passing 15 to 20 miles N. of Ushant, as had been our intention, we were heading straight for the reef-encumbered expanse of water that lies between the island and the mainland. We were now as near the brink of disaster as we had been at any time throughout a cruise notable for the number of perils it had presented for our enlivenment.

Without a moment's delay, and with our hearts tapping against our teeth, at the first sound of the siren we gybed, sailed the yacht N.W., and hoped against hope that we might yet make good our escape from the awaiting maw of destruction. The steady lulling of the wind and the discovery that the flood tide had still two hours to run to the north-eastward weighed down our hearts with still greater despondency, for, if the wind failed us utterly, the tide must inevitably sweep the yacht into the midst of the many dangers lurking to leeward. The situation, uncomfortable in itself, was rendered all the more uncomfortable by the impossibility of piercing for more than a few yards the blanket of fog.

But there was no need yet to despair, and soon from our ears we were deriving encouragement. Slowly, but steadily, the sound of the siren was brought from the starboard bow to the starboard quarter. Its loudness proved that the rock was alarmingly near, but the yacht, in spite of the lightness of the wind, continued to slip past the unseen peril, and our spirits revived.

In the same way the sound of the Crac'h siren was slowly brought from the bow to abeam, and, onwards, to the quarter. By 5 p.m. we felt, now that the tide was about to change, that we had successfully withdrawn from the entanglement into which we had blundered.

A partial lifting of the fog allowed us to see the narrowness of our escape.

Through tinted vapour looming large,  
Ambiguous shapes obscurely rode.

W. WATSON.

The ambiguous shapes resolved themselves into the Crac'h lighthouse and the lighthouse standing on La Jument rock, the former barely on our quarter, the

latter directly astern. We had scraped past both at extremely close quarters.

With, possibly, unseemly nonchalance, we sat down to a comfortable tea, and found that the late adventure had not diminished our hunger, a fact which caused general disappointment, for, in the growing shortage of provisions, a failure of the appetite in one would have been noted with quiet satisfaction by the others.

When Duncan, on our return, learnt correct Greenwich time, and was able, by correcting the chronometer, to revise his calculations, he found that our last fix (5 p.m. 20th., Lat.  $46^{\circ} 51' 0''$  and Long.  $6^{\circ} 49' 0''$ ), based upon incorrect time, put the yacht 17 miles too far to the westward. Consequently, instead of passing Ushant at a distance of 17 miles, as we expected, we came right down upon the top of the island. Even from the corrected position our N.E. course ought, theoretically, to have carried the yacht past outside at the distance of a couple of miles, but a strong flood tide swept her both ahead of our reckoning and some distance to the eastward. The tides about Ushant are rapid, and southward of it the flood has a strong E. set.

The fog disappeared, but a dead calm came. It was fortunate for us that it had not come sooner. The evening was chilly. At 9 p.m. barometer 30.33. A faint air hovering between S.S.E. and S.S.W. caused many gybes, but helped us only slightly on our course N. by E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E. towards the Lizard. At 11.30 p.m. dead calm and thick fog made a simultaneous return.

*Friday, September 22.* Not a breath of wind was felt till 7.30 a.m., and then only a N.N.W. draught of the briefest duration. Barometer 30.25. The morning was dull, but the fog was gone. Last night we carried the sidelights again. Crossing the lonely Bay we were obliged, through shortness of paraffin, to dispense with their

protection, and to depend, in case of need, upon a light kept ready in the cockpit for immediate display. Our side-lights were endowed with the mighty thirst of a dipsomaniac.

The day was long and wearisome. The sun shone forth for a short time with a diffident look, but soon shamefacedly slunk, like a whipped puppy, behind the canopy of cloud. From daylight to dark our hopes were only seldom raised by the breathing of faint draughts which, by the time the canvas was trimmed for their proper reception, disappeared again with bashful coyness. Every shred of tobacco had been smoked; every book on board had been read; the yacht required little attention, and time hung heavy on our hands.

At 9 p.m. barometer 30.28. When Duncan took charge there was a vague suspicion of wind from N.W.

*Saturday, September 23.* From midnight till 3 a.m. not a breath broke the dullness of my inactive watch. Thereafter, till 6 a.m., V. H. enjoyed the trifling advantage of a faint N.W. breeze. After that hour till 9 a.m. there was no pretence of wind. Barometer 30.08. The deep drop in the barometer was regarded with satisfaction, for any change could hardly fail to be an improvement upon the reign of perpetual calm.

At length the water was gently rippled by the faintest of faint flutterings from S.W. It gathered strength slowly. In time the yacht was going fast enough to trail the log-line out astern, and at 11 a.m. the log-wheel began to revolve. Since the passing of Ushant we had neglected to note the figures on the dial of the log, for its record was too untrustworthy to deserve the smallest credence. After 30 hours of almost breathless calm, after the drift of many tides up Channel and back again, with a sun that sulked, like Achilles in his tent,

our position was merely a matter of indeterminate conjecture, but we continued to run on N. by E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  E., and hoped in the end to fetch up near the Lizard.

The weather remained dull and cold, and bathing, erewhile a joy, had become a repulsive duty. With a howl of joy Duncan discovered the stump of a half-smoked cigar which, though it looked extremely nasty, gave to the finder unqualified delight. From the breakfast teapot V. H. saved the tea-leaves. After a perfunctory drying they were stuffed into the bowl of his pipe, but many matches and much sucking failed to produce a wreath of smoke. A tentative raid upon the tea-caddy was firmly suppressed. My own sufferings were only aggravated by the recollection of sundry lines from Calverley's Ode to Tobacco :

Sweet when the morn is grey,  
Sweet when they've cleared away  
Lunch, and, at fall of day,  
Possibly sweetest.

In the afternoon the wind added a touch of greater vigour to its delicate blowing. At 3 p.m., from the few data in our possession, we calculated that the yacht was about 40 miles from Ushant—at the most, barely half-way across the width of the Channel. At dusk the wind improved still further in strength, but worked to N.W. At 9 p.m. barometer 29.98 ; wind N. Clouds were massing to windward, and the sky was assuming a threatening aspect.

The yacht was heading a bare N.E. Scarcely had my trick at the tiller begun when my eye caught to N.N.E. a flash on the sky. My shout of information was received below with outspoken incredulity, nor, when a head was thrust up the companion hatchway to inspect, could anything be seen of my alleged discovery.

But my eye had not played me false. In a few minutes the regular flash was sighted again, and was unmistakably the reflection of the light we were eager to find. Clear as the reflection was, the light itself could have been little less than 40 miles away. At 10.30 p.m. the wind worked further westward, and, the yacht's head coming up a couple of points, we reached on easily N.E. by N. with the light just open on the port bow.

*Sunday, September 24.* Till 4.30 a.m. the yacht slipped on upon this bearing without any pinching. At that hour, when the Lizard appeared to be still ten miles away, her head began to fall off persistently, and by 6 a.m. she was looking up no higher than N.E. She was already far to E. of the point. At 7.30 a.m. we tacked, and on a N.W. bearing made the land half-way between Beast point and Black Head. With the last of the E. going stream, the yacht lay up along the land, and we were sanguine of accomplishing with ease the 12 miles that lay between us and St. Anthony's lighthouse. The morning was heavy, and rain or fog seemed equally probable. Barometer 29.98.

But the N. wind fell very light, and in the early afternoon the yacht drifted back with the tide almost as far as Black Head, which had been passed several hours before. The sun came out and ate up the threatening fog. We comforted our impatience by reflecting that the delay was immaterial, because, with the Sunday closing of shops, it would be impossible, till the morrow, to purchase the supplies that we sorely needed. So nearly finished was the bread that we rose from our meals with hunger unappeased.

At 3 p.m. the W. stream ceased, and the yacht began to make ground, but it was sunset before we weathered the Manacles, and, with a slightly better breeze, continued somewhat wearily our dead beat to

windward. At 8 p.m. we were abreast of St. Anthony's lighthouse. The gentle breeze which had wafted us so far, weary of well-doing, lightly abandoned us at a most inconvenient moment. In absolute calm the spring tide ebbing from the harbour got the yacht in its grip, and swept her relentlessly back to sea. Barometer 29.8.

We finished the bread at supper, and wondered, as we lingered over each mouthful, whether the calm would inflict upon us a hungry to-morrow, or whether we should be lucky enough to reach an anchorage off Falmouth town early enough to purchase a breakfast. We were more amused than annoyed by the check at the very door of our port, and likened ourselves to Peris hovering disconsolately outside the barred gates of Paradise. I went to bed. V. H., whose turn it was on deck, by some specious reasoning, persuaded Duncan to break the dreary monotony of a calm by pooling their watches and taking the deck, turn and turn about, an hour at a time.

But their arrangement came to nothing, for, at 11:30 p.m., a smart S.S.W. breeze came whistling out of the void, and in headlong haste hurried the yacht towards the harbour. The night was very dark, and the Black rock stood in our way, but, by keeping close along Pendennis shore, we hoped to avoid the danger of this unlighted obstacle.

*Monday, September 25.* Severe things were said of the harbour authorities for their neglect to mark with a light a source of anxiety to every stranger who enters after dark. We passed it safely without sighting it at all. By the time the piers were reached it was blowing hard. We rounded them, and, soon after midnight, let the anchor go in the first clear berth that offered. Hunger and thirst were quickly forgotten in the oblivion of sleep.

At 7 a.m., before a boisterous S. wind, the yacht romped under mizen and staysail to the neighbourhood of her usual berth, and the others, hurrying ashore, soon returned with ample supplies of bread and eggs, butter and marmalade—and tobacco! After an unhurried breakfast we felt for the first time for several days that the pangs of ravenous hunger were completely appeased.

Careless of the duty of washing up, we were lazily filling the cabin with smoke, when the custom house officers, in answer to our signal flaunting from the truck, boarded the yacht from their motor launch. They accepted, without hesitation, my assertion that there were no dutiable stores on board, gave us our clearance, and quickly withdrew. There was nothing to detain them, for the emptiness of the yacht's cellar rendered impossible the customary hospitality.

We unanimously decided, now that we were safely returned, that the cruise had been a grand success. Both outward and homeward passages, it was true, had been hampered by more than a fair share of fog and calm. Still, while yachts about our own coasts were waging with wet and wind an unending contest, we had been blessed, for the most part, with glorious weather. We had experienced moments of painful excitement, nay, of chilling anxiety, but such moments do for a cruise what seasoning does for a dish, and give it a piquancy that might without them be entirely missing.

A puzzled schoolboy, badgered by an unreasonable master to frame a definition of memory, blurted out in desperation: "It's the thing you forget with!" As a definition his reply, one is fain to admit, falls short of perfection, but it has, at bottom, a foundation of truth. The memory recalls broad facts with ease, but quickly



loses grip of disagreeable details. Moreover, to the worst hours retrospect gives a rosy halo, the existence of which at the moment was not even suspected. Thus the whirligig of time brings in his benefits as well as his revenges.